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The narrative construction of emergent professional identities of skilled immigrants in Australia

Ekaterina Alferova
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TITLE PAGE

**THE NARRATIVE CONSTRUCTION OF
EMERGENT PROFESSIONAL IDENTITIES
OF SKILLED IMMIGRANTS IN AUSTRALIA**

A thesis submitted in fulfilment of the requirements for the award of the degree

DOCTOR OF PHILISOPHY

From

UNIVERSITY OF WOLLONGONG

By

EKATERINA ALFEROVA

School of Education

Faculty of Social Sciences

2017

DEDICATION

To my mum Galina

DECLARATION

I, Ekaterina Alferova, declare that the PhD thesis entitled “THE NARRATIVE CONSTRUCTION OF EMERGENT PROFESSIONAL IDENTITIES OF SKILLED IMMIGRANTS IN AUSTRALIA” is no more than 100,000 words in length including quotes and exclusive of tables, figures, appendices, bibliography, references, and footnotes. This thesis contains no material that has been submitted previously, in whole or in part, for the award of any other academic degree or diploma. Except where otherwise indicated, this thesis is my own work.

Ekaterina Alferova

ABSTRACT

This study addresses the issues of changing identities of highly skilled immigrants from non-English speaking backgrounds, recently arrived in Australia under the “General Skilled Migrant” Program. Taking into account the importance of skilled immigration for the current and future economic development of Australia, the study focusses on aspects of skilled immigration that go beyond its economic constituent, shifting attention to issues of skilled immigrants’ social identities and their sense of self. It is argued that professional participation of skilled immigrants is strongly tied to their social identities and changing self-perceptions.

This study provides an examination and analysis of processes of self-definition and redefinition, which five skilled immigrants experience during the period of transition from their previous countries of residence to a new cultural, professional, and social environment. These processes are examined in relation to factors, which impact the construction and negotiation of skilled immigrants’ identities, and the strategies they employ in order to adjust to new settings. Social and personal linguistic resources, upon which participants draw to negotiate their identities are also explored.

The qualitative approach employed in this study allowed for examination of skilled immigrant participants’ identities that emerged from a series of three interviews and e-mail exchanges with the researcher. The data were examined through the lenses of thematic analysis (Braun & Clarke, 2006) and social interactional analysis of participants’ narratives (De Fina & Georgakopoulou, 2008b).

The analysis of data revealed that during the period of transition to the new environment skilled immigrants in the study underwent complex and challenging processes of reconsideration and renegotiation of their professional and social identities, with their professional self-identification being most affected. Full professional engagement, which emerged as their major goal, was deferred due to various obstacles, such as the perceived informal disregard of their educational and professional credentials, and insufficient English language skills in professional settings, which required different registers or styles of English language. These factors, amongst others, functioned as limitations to skilled immigrants’ transition to the new environment, but also served as stimuli, prompting adjustments and modifications to their sense of self.

The analysis of the presentation and negotiation of skilled immigrants' identities and examination of linguistic resources and communication strategies they used contributes new knowledge to the literature on the role of discourse in adult migrant identity construction. Negotiation of skilled immigrants' real and projected participation in different domains of life reveals their priorities, goals, and main concerns during the period of transition to their new settings. A desire to sustain their sense of self as highly educated and skilled professionals, which appears as a shared goal, prompted participants in the study to explore different ways and apply various strategies to be able to position themselves in the new environment in accordance with their self-perceptions.

All participants expressed the need and importance for them to negotiate their professional voice in new cultural and social settings. During the process of negotiation, all participants faced an unanticipated issue of "culture-dependent" professions requiring development or appropriation of a different professional voice; the collapse of assumptions around "culture-neutral" professions; and a subsequent loss of agency. All these unexpected factors ultimately required identity shifts involving greater dimensions of scale and time than were initially considered by participants, initiating a series of mixed and complex experiences.

The pathways and strategies chosen by participants in the study to become functioning members of the new professional society ranged from getting higher degrees from Australian universities, seeking opportunities to establish relationships with the potential employers, improving knowledge of English language, to insisting on partial or complete "equivalence" of existing knowledge and credentials to Australian standards and thus, being resilient to receive any additional qualifications. It appears that these pathways and strategies had not been planned or anticipated prior to immigration, but were employed by participants as the result of their encounter with their new cultural, social, and professional environment.

The examination of skilled immigrants' reported experiences leads to a better understanding of the processes of their adjustments and adaptation to a new cultural, social, and professional environment, as well as provides insights on how these processes are shaped and regulated by different factors, such as policies, discourses, perceptions and anticipations.

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CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background to the study

1.1.1 Focus on skilled immigrants: economic and social factors

The issues of global human migration have increasingly become a focus of worldwide research, given the contemporary global population movement and the economic and social significance of the phenomenon (Akbari & MacDonald, 2014; De Fina, 2003; Hugo, 2004). As pointed out by Cameron and O’Hanlon-Rose (2011), the volume of worldwide migration is constantly increasing, and migration flows are becoming more complex, fuelled by factors, such as lowering rates of workforce participation and skills shortages. People’s mobility and transnationalism is facilitated by the changing character of global immigration, with options of moving permanently, temporarily, or on a circular basis. Castles (2016) refers to this as economic, political, social and cultural “regular cross-border relationships”. It is argued that mobility and various cross-border relationships lead to the emergence of new forms of “transnational belonging” and require new approaches to settlement and immigration policies (Castles, 2016).

The issues of immigration are highly relevant to Australia, which has been founded, built, and defined by mass migration (OECD, 2009; Patulny, 2015). Australian immigration policies are increasingly elaborated under globalisation, focussing on attracting workers and skilled immigrants to meet the ongoing needs of the economy (Castles, 2016; Walsh, 2008; Wright, 2015). It is expected that immigrants, who enter Australia under the Skilled Stream of the Migrant Program will possess the skills, qualifications, and level of English to successfully realise their potential and benefit the economy (Dauvergne, 2016; DIBP, 2014-2015). However, there is an issue of insufficient professional participation of skilled immigrants from diverse linguistic and cultural backgrounds, who in fact shape the majority of the skilled migration stream (Birrell & Healy, 2013).

Employability of highly educated skilled immigrants from non-English speaking backgrounds (NESBs) has been a longstanding issue in immigration (Akbari & MacDonald, 2014; Hawthorne, 2005). The barriers to entering the local workforce for

this category of immigrants, and the difficulties they experience with transferring their professional skills to the context of the destination country, include insufficient oral and written English language skills, a lack of professional networks, and limited knowledge of the Australian work market and workplace culture (NSW Government Report, 2007; Shah & Burke, 2005; Webb, 2015). These barriers often lead to skilled immigrants accepting low skilled or casual positions, resulting in considerable wastage of skills and subsequent productivity loss (Hugo, 2004; Sardana, Zhu, & Veen, 2016).

While barriers to skilled immigrants' employment and the economic consequences have been expansively examined and documented, the social issues that these barriers create in the immigrants' lives are less known, given the prevailing economic discourse, which populates much skilled immigration research (Deeb & Bauder, 2015; Roberts, 2011). Traditionally, the social issues, such as inclusion and exclusion, ethnicity and English language skills are mainly ascribed to unskilled immigrants (Nagel, 2009) who are considered to have fewer social resources and be in "real danger" of social disconnection and isolation from Australian society (Patulny, 2015, p. 228).

On the contrary, skilled immigrants are perceived as possessing the capacity to successfully accommodate themselves in their new country of residence both professionally and socially (DIBP, 2014-2015). However, the difficulties, which skilled immigrants from NESBs encounter during the process of their accommodation indicate the need for some examination of the processes that they experience (Patulny, 2015). It is argued here that an understanding of their experiences and the impact of these experiences on immigrants' professional and social participation is important for unpacking the problems and developing the approaches which could potentially lead to a better and faster utilisation of skilled immigrants' capabilities (Deeb & Bauder, 2015; Patulny, 2015).

1.1.2 Social aspects of immigration and identity

Economic and social aspects of adjustment and integration are two inextricable sides of a successful immigration process. The social aspects of immigration are important to research because “involvement of migrants in widespread civic activities ... is a key indicator of a well-integrated society” (Patulny, 2015, p. 208). To capture the complex intersections in professional and social lives associated with the move and adjustment to new cultural environment, it is necessary to understand skilled immigrants’ identity – their relationship to the world, and their construction and negotiation of this relationship across time and space (Jenkins, 2008; Norton, 2000).

The conditions of immigration trigger “continuous definition and redefinition of one's identity and of one's membership into larger communities” (De Fina, 2003, p. 3), meaning that immigrants’ self-perceptions can become challenged, reconsidered and modified over time. It is argued that immigrants’ (co-)construction and negotiation of their identities in the new language and social settings can become a site of struggle (Norton, 2000). Baynham (2006) calls immigration a process where “settled and stable senses of self are unsettled and challenged” (p. 376). The “critical experiences” of immigration such as prolonged contacts with a second language and new and different social, cultural, and professional settings, can even cause an “irreversible destabilization of the individual’s sense of self” (Block, 2007, p. 21). Having to deal with a whole range of new practices and discourses, immigrants might experience devaluation of their cultural and social resources by the new structures of power and ideologies of dominant social groups (Bourdieu, 1977). This can affect further integration of skilled immigrants from NESBs and their productivity in the new home country.

The ability to negotiate identification with, and belonging to, a particular social configuration is considered a crucial component of identity construction. Language plays a central role in this process (Pavlenko & Blackledge, 2004). In the case of skilled immigrants from NESBs, discursive construction of their desired and real professional and social engagement in English as their second or additional language can be challenging. However, there is a lack of research on the ways that people negotiate their participation in different domains of life in their second or additional language (De Fina & Georgakopoulou, 2012; Norton & McKinney, 2011; Wagner, 2004).

1.2. Purpose of the study

The purpose of this study was to explore how five highly-skilled adult immigrants to Australia constructed, negotiated, and represented their identities in English as their second or additional language. In order to discover how their perceptions of themselves and of reality were changing throughout the processes of immigration and social and cultural adaptation to the new settings, their linguistic resources and social adaptation strategies were explored. Improved understandings of their needs and requirements provided the basis for further consideration of conditions impacting resettlement and adaptation of skilled immigrants.

1.3 Research questions

The major research question asked in the present study was as follows:

What processes of self-definition and redefinition do skilled immigrants experience in the period of resettlement?

In order to answer the main research question, the following sub-questions were addressed:

1. How do skilled immigrants draw on social and personal linguistic resources in the construction and representation of their second language identities?
2. What factors, emerging from the participants' narratives, shape both the process of construction and negotiation of their identities, and the overall process of their accommodation in the new country?
3. What strategies do adult skilled migrants employ to adapt to new social and cultural settings?

1.4 Approach to the study

The conceptual framework adopted in this study is situated within socio-cultural and critical theories of language and identity (Bakhtin, 1986; De Fina & Georgakopoulou, 2008b, 2015), with the focus on immigrants' narrative identity construction and negotiation in a second language context. This framework provides relevant approaches to the key constructs of the present study: narrative, language, identity, and the relationships between them, as well as instruments appropriate for the analysis of these relationships. In such approaches, narratives become the central aspect of analysis (Bamberg, 2006, 2010; Baynham, 2006, 2011; De Fina, 2003, 2006, 2009; De Fina & Georgakopoulou, 2012, 2015).

Within this framework, identity is seen as socially constructed and negotiated in interactive relationships (De Fina, 2009), with language being the fundamental resource available for the cultural production of identity (Bucholtz & Hall, 2004). Narratives of personal experience are considered as a crucial resource "for the display of self and identity" (Schiffrin, 1996, p. 168). Narratives are seen as a genre, which allows individuals to shape the configuration of their self-identification, to construct themselves as particular persons in everyday interactions (Bamberg, 1999), and to stress the agency in dealing with the social structures of power (Davis & Harre, 1990, p. 52). Individuals assert and negotiate their desired and imagined identities through the concepts of positioning and performance, which allow the speakers to establish social roles both at the local and global levels, providing insights into construction of social relations in narratives (De Fina & Georgakopoulou, 2012, p. 167).

1.5 Methodology

To answer the research questions and examine the process of construction, representation, and negotiation of identities of five highly-skilled immigrants to Australia, this study employed a qualitative multiple case study design. Narratives are considered a central means by which people construct identities (Pavlenko, 2004), and therefore the method of narrative inquiry (De Fina, 2003; Creswell, 2007) was chosen to explore the ways participants' perceptions and representations of themselves changed in the course of adjustment to new cultural and social settings.

Data were collected over a period of one year via three face-to-face interviews with each of the study participants and their e-mail exchanges with the researcher. During the interviews, the participants of the study were prompted to provide narrative accounts of their life experiences, including immigration and period of their adaptation. In their e-mail exchanges, the participants were asked to report their occasional day-to-day interactions that they considered interesting and significant.

Interviews and e-mail exchanges resulted in a large quantity of textual data. These two types of data were analysed using thematic analysis (Boyatzis, 1998; Braun & Clarke, 2006), a social interactional approach to narrative analysis of De Fina and Georgakopoulou (2008b), and positioning analysis (Bamberg, 1996, 2006).

1.6 Structure of the thesis

This thesis is written in a traditional chapter format. Each chapter contains an introduction and conclusion. A summary of each of the thesis chapters is provided below.

CHAPTER 2: LITERATURE REVIEW

This literature review examines some of the key studies in the field of adult immigrants' identity formation (De Fina, 2003, 2006; Norton Peirce, 1995; Norton, 2000; Lantolf & Pavlenko, 2000) as well as some recent studies on the issues of immigration relevant to the research focus of the current study (Darvin & Norton, 2015; Remennick, 2013; Roberts, 2011). The literature review focuses on skilled immigrants' professional and social identities and their interconnectedness with the process of people's adaptation and incorporation to the new social and cultural environment. The findings from these studies have informed and shaped the direction of the present research.

CHAPTER 3: THEORETICAL AND CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

This chapter presents theoretical and conceptual frameworks for the study. It discusses the socio-cultural and critical theories of language and identity adopted in the present study. The current views on the key constructs of the study - narrative, language, identity - are presented and discussed. This chapter also discusses the relationships between the key constructs, as well as the instruments used for the analysis of these relationships.

The current study is based in understanding that identity is socially constructed through the processes of ongoing socialisation and interaction. From this perspective, language is recognized as a central tool for the presentation and negotiation of multiple subject positions (Pavlenko & Blackledge, 2004). To investigate how skilled immigrants in the study (re)construct and present their identities, the participants' second language linguistic resources and language practices are analysed using the social interactional approach (De Fina & Georgakopoulou, 2008b, 2012). In this theoretical approach, narratives become the central aspect of analysis (Bamberg, 2010; Baynham, 2011; De Fina, 2009; De Fina & Georgakopoulou, 2015).

CHAPTER 4: METHODOLOGY

This chapter provides an explanation of the research design, methods of data collection and tools for data analysis in relation to research questions. The qualitative narrative inquiry design was employed to examine emergent identities of five skilled immigrants in Australia. This chapter also includes a detailed introduction of the participants, and a discussion of the limitations of the study and its ethical considerations.

Methods of data analysis, based on the social interactional approach to narrative inquiry (De Fina & Georgakopoulou, 2008b), positioning (Bamberg, 2006), and thematic analysis (Braun & Clarke, 2006; Boyatzis, 1998), encompassed examination of linguistics and interactional features of the narratives, and included the analysis of content, discursive features, and performance and positioning.

CHAPTER 5: FINDINGS

The chapter presents the analysis of individual cases for each of the five participants. The series of semi-structured interviews and e-mail exchanges over the period of one year generated rich data of various types, including long and short narratives, and written reports on day-to-day interactions. The conceptual framework for data analysis is also presented and discussed in relation to literature.

The data analysis was conducted through thematic analysis in relation to the identity claims of the participants; through narrative analysis of the participants' stories and their self-presentation (their use of linguistic forms and discursive features in shaping and presenting their identity claims), as well as through analysis of different roles and positions, taken and performed by the interviewees in their narratives (participants' positioning in the "story worlds" and their "storytelling behaviour").

The themes identified in the initial interview with each participant were followed up in the analysis of subsequent interviews, thus treating all interviews as sequential texts. This sequential approach to the analysis of narrative accounts allowed for examination of the participants' identity claims in their subtleties and development. Participants' social and personal resources and themes, emerging from the interviews, were examined through the concepts of chronotope and spatio-temporal scales; indexicals; voice and double-voicing.

CHAPTER 6: DISCUSSION

This chapter draws together and compares and contrasts all the five cases in relation to identified themes. The similarities and differences between the cases are examined in relation to literature and discussed both at a micro level (for the cases in this study), and a macro level (in relation to the wider community of skilled immigrants). The issues of professional and social self-identification and their interrelatedness with the processes of professional and social adjustment of skilled immigrants to the new settings are discussed.

In addition, the discursive construction of skilled immigrants' identity claims, in terms of the linguistic resources and communicative strategies they draw upon to represent

themselves in the new environment, are examined and analysed across the cases. These findings are further discussed in relation to relevant societal issues and contexts, such as the ideas of multiculturalism and immigration, language policy and requirements, and their role in supporting or constraining processes of skilled immigrants' successful accommodation in the new settings.

CHAPTER 7: CONCLUSION

This chapter draws the conclusions to the study. It explicitly addresses the research questions followed by a discussion of the contribution of this research to the field, as well as its limitations, implications, and recommendations for future research.

The conclusion of this study is focussed on the summary of the identity developments accompanying the process of professional and social accommodation of skilled immigrants from non-English language backgrounds in Australia. Various factors impacting on the process of participants' construction and presentation of self in the new settings are also examined, along with the strategies employed by the participants to socially and professionally adapt to the environment of the new country of their residence.

1.7 Significance of the study

The research contributes to understanding of the processes involved in the adjustment of skilled immigrants from NESBs to their new country of residence. In particular, it provides an understanding of the social issues related to the construction and negotiation of self in an environment where English as a second or additional language plays a dominant role. The study aims to add to recent developments in the role of narrative discourse in skilled immigrants' identity construction, and the ways that adult immigrants take up discourses as part of the process of constructing and presenting their identity in an additional language.

The research findings, based on analysis of the participants' reflections on their immigrant experience, lead to better understanding of the processes which skilled immigrants undergo during the transitional time of adaptation and adjustments to the host society.

Knowledge of the factors that impact on the process of adult immigrants' accommodation in Australia provides information on how and in what directions this process can be stimulated and accelerated. Therefore, the research in this field adds to the knowledge about skilled immigrants' needs and requirements, and can possibly lead to consideration of programs and initiatives aimed to better facilitate the process of successful immigrants' settlement.

1.8. Summary

This chapter provided an overview of the present study. It outlined the background to the study in relation to current literature on the adjustment of skilled immigrants from non-English speaking backgrounds to Australian social and professional contexts. It outlined the aim and research questions of the study in relation to its significance and presented the theoretical and conceptual frameworks employed in the study. It then presented the methods of data collection and analysis utilised in this study to meet the research objectives. The last section explained the organisation of the thesis and briefly described the contents of each chapter.

CHAPTER 2: REVIEW OF LITERATURE ON IMMIGRANTS' IDENTITIES IN SECOND LANGUAGE

Introduction

Research on language and identity has experienced significant growth in the last twenty years and has established the fundamental roles of linguistic processes and strategies in the creation, negotiation and establishment of identities (De Fina et al., 2006). Recent years are characterised by a shift in research of identity, positing narratives as the major means by which people construct and present their identities in various contexts (De Fina & Georgakopoulou, 2012, 2015; Georgakopoulou, 2011). The narrative shift (Bamberg, 2006; De Fina et al., 2006) has been triggered by “newly emerging interests in language, interpretation, culture and subjectivity that took shape ... in the broader sociopolitical landscapes of restructuring the academy and its disciplines” (Bamberg, 2016, p. 2). Current theorisation of identity and narrative is positioned at the intersection of “lived experience, subjectivity, identity, and sense of self” (Bamberg, 2016, p. 1). It has been acknowledged that the context of adult immigration is one in which the sense of self and identity is threatened most (Baynham, 2015; Block, 2007), as immigration is a process that “crucially involves a continuous definition and redefinition of one's identity and of one's membership into larger communities” (De Fina, 2003, p. 3).

This literature review aims to examine some of the key studies in the field of adult immigrants' identity formation, narratively (orally or in a written form) expressed in speakers' additional language. Further, the literature review addresses some recent studies relevant to the research focus of the current study, with a particular emphasis on skilled immigrants' social and professional identities and their interconnectedness with the process of people's adaptation and incorporation to the new social and cultural environment. The findings from these studies have informed and shaped the direction of the present research. Major concepts and gaps emerging from this literature review are further examined in-depth and expanded in Chapter 4 “Theoretical Framework”.

It becomes evident from the literature that existing body of research on skilled immigrants has been conducted from a predominantly economic and statistical point of view. It emerges, however, that such an approach does not address the complex issues constituting the process of skilled immigration. There is little attention paid to examination of

accommodative and adjustment strategies, and skilled immigrants' self-perceptions during the time of transition into the new environment. These questions need to be explored in order to create a fuller picture of the phenomenon of skilled immigration in Australia and beyond.

2. 1 Studies on immigrants' second language and identity formation

2.1.1 Identity and investment in language learning

A seminal study by Norton Peirce (1995), cited by many scholars as crucial to reframing debates on identity (Block, 2007; Morgan & Clarke, 2011; Swain & Deters, 2007), examined the process of adult migrant identity construction from a poststructuralist perspective, pointing not only to the importance of high motivation in learning second language (L2), but also to the complementary construct of a learner's investment in the target language practices. In her study of 5 immigrant women from different cultural, language, and educational background (from high school to MA) in Canada Norton Peirce (1995) discovered that high levels of motivation did not necessarily result in successful language learning, as most psychological theories of motivation did not address the questions of language learners' identities and the relations of power which language learners had to negotiate. Norton Peirce (1995) argues that the sociological construct of investment seeks to make a connection between the process of learning L2 and language practices.

The construct of investment (Norton, 2000; Norton Peirce, 1995) draws on Bourdieu's (1977) term "cultural capital" associated with the knowledge, credentials, and modes of thought that characterize different classes and groups. Bourdieu (1977) argued that cultural capital has differential exchange value in different social fields. Acquiring a wider range of symbolic and material resources by investing in L2, learners believe that they increase the value of their cultural capital, thus re-evaluating their sense of self in the present and for the future (Norton, 2000). According to Norton Peirce (1995), such investment helps negotiate complex identities of language learners in often inequitable relations of power between target-language speakers and target-language learners. These ideas have been refined and advanced in further studies and discussions on identities of

language learners and their investment in learning language (Darvin & Norton, 2014; McKinney & Norton, 2008; Norton & McKinney, 2011; Norton & Toohey, 2011).

In a recent study, Darvin and Norton (2015) expanded the concept of investment, arguing that the changing global political and economic landscape and new patterns of immigration reshape language ideologies, linguistic capital, and interactions within multicultural environments (p. 41). The notion of “investment” in their study of two language learners, located in different social and cultural settings, evolves as a model, comprising the concepts of identity, ideology and capital. Darvin and Norton (2015) refer to identity as “... a struggle of habitus and desire, of competing ideologies and imagined identities” (p. 45), thus pointing to multiple aspects, which influence the process of language learners’ identity formation. Darvin and Norton (2015) argue that the manifestation of the power in various contexts can be examined through investigation of ideology and the concept of capital, which leads to understanding of how speakers gain and lose power. The value of learners’ capital, according to Darvin and Norton (2015), equals affirmation of their identities, but may not be considered as valuable by the structures of power and the dominant ideologies of the receiving society. Darvin and Norton (2015) conclude that language learners have agency and capacity to recognise and oppose this ideological disposition, and claim their right to speak by investing in learning and acquiring material and symbolic resources.

2.1.2 Identities and their presentations in various socio-historic contexts

Similarly to the idea of investment in learning languages (Norton, 2000), Lantolf and Pavlenko (2000) in their study of several adult migrants from Eastern Europe to the USA pointed out that it is through agency and intentionality that an adult individual becomes bicultural and bilingual. Lantolf and Pavlenko (2000) suggested that second language learning and participation in discursive practices for the participants of the study was about a “profound struggle to reconstruct a self” (p.174). The narratives depicted the experiences of people who have both physically and symbolically crossed the border between one way of being, and another, and perceived themselves as becoming someone other than who they were before (Lantolf & Pavlenko, 2000). Entailed in this crossing was the active and intentional (re)construction of history through narratives.

Lantolf and Pavlenko (2000) argue that individuals are forced to overcome the conflict which arises when they bring their selves, constructed in the past by conventions different from current conventions, into the present, hence they have to reorganise and even organise anew the plots of their life stories. The result of this re-organisation is the formation of new ways to mean, including making sense of both experiences and themselves, through intentional social interactions with members of the new culture. In arguing so, Lantolf and Pavlenko (2000) emphasise the role of cultural resources and history in the organisation and mediation of mind, and point out to parallels to Vygotsky's thinking on the ontogenetic development. In both cases, as Lantolf and Pavlenko (2000) summarise, the individual's mental organisation changes through the appropriation of new mediational means available in society.

Lantolf and Pavlenko (2000) argue that narratives provide a space where identities are reconstructed and life stories retold in order to resolve internal conflicts between dominant ideologies and personal day-to-day experiences of participation in new discursive practices. The reconstruction of identity in a second language includes two phases: the phase of loss and the phase of recovery and (re)construction (Lantolf & Pavlenko, 2000). Further, the phase of recovery and (re)construction encompasses four critical stages:

- appropriation (in Bakhtin's term, "ventriloquation") of other's voices
- emergence of one's own new voice
- translation therapy: reconstruction of one's past
- continuous growth "into" new positions and subjectivities

(Lantolf & Pavlenko, 2000, p. 163).

Lantolf and Pavlenko (2000) conclude that a new identity in an additional language is built through an intentional renegotiation of the past stories and previously constructed identities, thus connecting the process of immigrants' identity construction to the concepts of time and space – "chronotope" (Bakhtin, 1981).

Examining narrative identities constructed in autobiographic memoirs by the first generation of European immigrants at the beginning of the 20th century in the USA, Pavlenko (2004) compares them with the identity negotiation of contemporary immigrants from NESBs. In contrast to Lantolf and Pavlenko's (2000) study, Pavlenko

(2004) found that at the turn of the 20th century immigrants' negotiation of their identities in their new linguistic, cultural, and social environment was not impacted upon either by their non-English speaking backgrounds, or by their knowledge of English language. Though the immigrants recognised English as a key to assimilation and performance of their professional and public identities, there was an "atmosphere of linguistic tolerance" typical for that period of time in the USA, with even small linguistic achievements "celebrated as a model for other immigrants" (Pavlenko, 2004, p. 63). On the contrary, Pavlenko (2004) found that the present immigrants' negotiation of personal and professional identities was strongly linked to negotiation of new "linguistic" identities and, particularly, to the "painful experiences" of learning the English language (Pavlenko, 2004, p.63). Pavlenko argues that the differences between these two groups demonstrated the impact of socio-historic circumstances – including dominant ideologies, English language, and requirements for English language competence - on negotiation of identities.

2.1.3 Identity, narratives, and performance

In her study of undocumented immigrants from Mexico to the USA De Fina (2003, 2006) investigated the connection between the local expression of adult migrant identities in narrative discourse and the social processes that surround migration. She argues that an immediate context, a setting and an audience shape the narrative that a speaker tells. However, at the same time, the narrative is shaped by much larger contexts, of culture and society, of inclusion and exclusion, that similarly, but separately, make some things tellable, others unsayable, and some too obvious to say. The study demonstrates how identities are constructed in the course of complex interpersonal negotiations and are subject to many contiguous framing of social texts and subtexts. Storytelling is described first, as schematic representations and conceptualisation of social relationships, and second, as the negotiation of shared or unshared representations of group identity. De Fina (2003, 2006) points out that narrators' local displays of identity relate to more holistic perception of self than that, which emerges through the establishment of connections between identities and immediate actions. She argues for the need of more detailed textual examination of story and performance devices in order to connect accounts of identity as built on ideologies with more interactional, locally managed

phenomenon (De Fina, 2006). These ideas are elaborated in her further work, relevant to the question of immigrants' identities, their presentation, in connections with macro- and micro- discursive contexts (De Fina, 2009; De Fina & Georgakopoulou, 2012).

In line with De Fina's (2003, 2006) approach to language and identity, as expressed in discourse, is Baynham's (2006) study of Moroccan illegal migrants to the UK, where he focuses attention on the role of speaking positions people take in discourse. Baynham (2006) argues that it is through performance features that speakers "display and play out identities" (p. 378). Drawing on a cultural study perspective on identity in discourse, Baynham (2006) examines various resources speakers use in order to refine their speaking positions and define themselves in terms of "what they are not", as well as in terms of "what they are" (p. 384). Here Baynham (2006) refers to relational identity. Baynham (2006) argues further that in addition to being relational, this identity work is also positional: conversational partners, as characters in a narrative, are positioned and position themselves. These positions involve different types of authorisation or entitlements to speak, as well as the construction of self-identities in contrast with those of others, consequently highlighting characteristics of self-presentation and identity work that emerges in complex negotiation of the self (Baynham, 2006).

2.1.4 Summary

To sum up, the literature demonstrates that identity has been studied from different methodological perspectives and using a variety of approaches, such as social structuralism, post-structuralism, social constructionism. It is also argued that the volume of recent publications on identity demonstrates a prevailing poststructuralist take on identity studies (Block, 2007). Despite a variety of approaches to identity, there are common points that emerge from the seminal studies on identities and second language discussed above:

- Identity formation is a process that takes place on interactional occasions, resulting from processes of negotiation and entextualisation (De Fina, 2003, 2006; Lantolf & Pavlenko, 2000);

- It is through discourse and discursive practices that the social is reflected in the individual and it is through discourse that an individual engages with the social; thus discourse links individual and social identities (De Fina et al., 2006);
- Identities are seen not as simply represented in discourse, but rather performed, enacted and embodied through a variety of linguistic and non-linguistic means, such as speaking positions and voices of others (Baynham, 2006; De Fina et al., 2006; Lantolf & Pavlenko, 2000);
- Identities are seen as sites of struggle, influenced by structures of power and ideological sites of control of the society (Bourdieu, 1977, 1984; Darvin & Norton, 2015).

In line with the findings from the examined studies, the present study draws on understanding of identity formation of immigrants from non-English speaking backgrounds as a process that takes place in frequently inequitable contexts, in which culturally and historically situated speakers use language as a tool to negotiate their multiple identities with respect to the target language and their heritage communities. While most of the discussed above studies examined identity developments mediated by L2 of undocumented and unskilled immigrants, the present research focusses on the context of skilled immigration. The present study shifts emphasis to the professional and social aspects of identities of the participants in the study, as the questions of professional and social participation of skilled immigrants in the new society come to the fore.

2.2 Skilled immigrants' identities and their professional and social participation

Piller and Takashi (2011) point out that search for employment and economic opportunities have always been at first place amongst many reasons for people's decision to migrate, and many immigrants measure the success of their immigration in economic terms. Similarly, receiving countries judge successful immigrants' settlement in terms of its labour outcome (Piller & Takashi, 2011). The latest studies on a category of skilled immigrants (with post-secondary or higher education) show that economic and employment related factors are important, but not the only reasons in their decision to immigrate (Khoo, 2014). For example, studies on skilled immigrants in Australia reveal that amongst other constituents, impacting on skilled immigrants' decision to choose

Australia as a country of residence are: strong social rights for permanent residents; climate and good environment; a healthy and attractive lifestyle; political stability and security; multiculturalism as a special recognition of cultural rights and equal participation; and a better future for their families (Castles, 2016; Khoo, 2014). While these aspects appear to be important in deciding on the country of skilled immigrants' destination, employment is still considered key to social inclusion as economic well-being "powerfully impacts all other dimensions of life" (Piller & Takashi, 2011, p. 592).

2.2.1 Professional identity

The literature demonstrates that apart from economic and financial factors, there are other dimensions, such as professional and social identities, which encompass skilled immigrants' professional and social participation in the new country of their residence. Gini (1998) points out that "work is one of the primary means by which adults find their identity and form their character", and "*where we work, how we work, what we do at work ... indelibly marks us for life*" (p. 708, italics in original), raising the issue of professional identity and its importance in people's lives. Sfard and Prusak (2005) define professional identities as "stories about persons" (p. 14), narratively constructed and presented in interactions with other people. In the field of research on professional identity and narrative inquiry, professional identity is seen as "the interconnectedness of our experiences, place, and knowledge that merge to become our identity, our narrative or story to live by" (MacGregor, 2009, p. 2).

According to Clandinin (2007), professional identity can be relational (influenced by the social and cultural constructs in specific contexts), temporal (captured in narratives at the particular moments in time), and continuous (changing according to life and professional experiences). In the context of immigration that means that the relational and continuous aspects of skilled immigrants' professional identities will be predictably impacted by the social and cultural constructs and experiences of the new professional and social settings. Furthermore, literature provides evidence that entry to professional workforce contains multiple barriers and obstacles, such as language difficulties, lack of local work experience, and misrecognition of professional and educational credentials (Akbari & MacDonald, 2014; Beeb & Bauder, 2015; Remennick, 2013). The findings from these

studies question an argument that skilled immigrants alone with their economic, cultural, and social capital are able to create “transnational spaces” and lead “fulfilling lives” in their new countries of residence (Block, 2007, p. 188). The issues of professional employment and professional identity emerge as key constituents of a “fulfilling” life for skilled immigrants, while their access to professional employment sometimes becomes a problematic issue.

The difficulties, which skilled immigrants from NESBs experience while seeking professional employment in the new country of residence are examined in the study by Remennick (2013). She provides a comprehensive comparative review of skilled immigrants’ employability in the USA, Canada, Australia, and the European Union, and lists the factors that explain skilled immigrants’ declining access to professional positions. Amongst these factors are heightened competition from the native population, unfair assessment of foreign credential, undermining of foreign work experience, and a negative social attitude towards skilled immigrants. Remennick (2013) further explores the experiences of representatives of three cohorts of highly educated and skilled immigrants to Israel: engineers, physicians, and teachers. She argues that skilled immigrants’ ability to relaunch their careers after resettlement relates to the level of cultural dependency of their profession (e.g. engineering being arguably minimally culturally dependent, and teaching being highly culturally dependent). Drawing upon individual- and group-level data, Remennick (2013) highlights the complex interplay between macro-economic, institutional, and individual variables, which shape skilled immigrants’ entry and mobility in professional workforce. She concludes that the current literature on skilled immigrants is dominated by statistical studies, which comprise the macro-level of analysis, whereas the micro-level, taking into account people’s personal resources and characteristics, is also needed.

While the study by Remennick (2013) draws attention to the issues of skilled immigrants’ adjustment to the new environment in accordance with culturally dependent specifics of their professions, the studies presented below examine various strategies and investments, which immigrants make and employ to achieve social inclusion and professional participation and development. The concept of investment in relation not only to learning a second or additional language, but also to different domains of life (such as establishing social networking, acquiring new codes of behaviour, and occupational practices in the

new settings) has been examined in several other studies on immigrants and in relation to their identities (Beeb & Bauder, 2015; Valenta, 2009).

2.2.2 Social networking

In the study on immigrants' social and cultural integration in Norway, Valenta (2009) examines the concept of investment in relation to immigrants' social networking. The particular focus of Valenta's qualitative study lies in examination of experiences and strategies, which immigrants use in the process of networking with their compatriots and Norwegians as representatives of host society in order to negotiate and reproduce their desired self-perceptions. The study demonstrated that immigrants were selective in establishing their relations with locals, their compatriots, and other immigrants, in that they were choosing between different categories of these people in accordance with their ethno-social practices and preferences. Valenta (2009) argues that this process of selective networking is best examined in terms of immigrants' identity reproduction and the symbolic meanings they attach to these established relations. Valenta points out that immigrants' relationships with various groups of people have different symbolic and interactional relevance for their identities. Immigrants' relationships with representatives of their host society may give them the feeling of belonging to mainstream society. However, their self-perceptions can be negatively impacted if they are unable to present themselves successfully in interactions, and are positioned in minority roles by the ethnic majority. Valenta argues that in such cases, immigrants' social networking is combined with dense socialisation with the segments of their ethnic communities. Valenta (2009) suggests that the reconcilable hybrid identities which depend on selective networking and continuous identity work are the modes of immigrants' dynamic incorporation and adaptation to the new society. Valenta also points out that a low degree of social integration is not necessarily a sign of unsuccessful integration or segregation. He concludes by drawing attention to the fact that immigrants' participation in different segments of life after resettlement depends not only on their actions and strategies, but is influenced by their access to different types of relationships and the readiness of the host society to accept its new members.

2.2.3 Accumulation of professional and social capital

In the study of ten highly skilled immigrants (with MA or PhD Degrees) from non-English and non-French language background in Canada, Beeb and Bauder (2015) found that participants' accumulation of various forms of social, cultural and linguistic capital not only assisted them in gaining employment, but enabled them to take managerial positions in their fields of expertise (the period of their residence in Canada at the time of the study ranged from 5 to 13 years). For the majority of the participants, this accumulation of capital was closely tied to developing competencies in intercultural communication. That included a strong command of English language, and also comprised knowledge of the rules of the game, meaning particular accepted codes of behaviour, norms of workforce engagement and conventions of occupational practices. Mentorship from established colleagues was often considered by the participants of the study as a form of "gatekeeping". The mentors' assistance allowed the transfer of the cultural capital of the new environment through the reproduction of cultural practices, while also assisting skilled immigrants to acquire new forms of social capital, such as establishing informal networking opportunities. Overall, the study highlighted the interconnectedness of different types of capital and the importance of accumulation of different resources, while also accentuating the role of linguistic competencies for professional engagement and career advancement. The adjustments made by the participants in the study included their adaptation and conformity to the norms and expectations in the local workplace.

2.2.4 Levels of professional and social engagement

Ryan and Mullholland (2015), in their study of highly skilled French immigrants to the United Kingdom, examined the skilled immigrants' experiences of social engagement with their new environments. Using the term embeddedness as a definition of "different degrees of attachment [...] within various social domains" (p.141), the researchers argue that embedding "may be a more nuanced and dynamic concept than an all or nothing view of 'integration'" (p. 151). It was found that the social networks in which skilled immigrants were involved may simultaneously connect them to different, spatially

dispersed places, and include local, transnational, and professional domains. However, the study revealed that skilled immigrants did not always maintain equal degrees of embeddedness across various domains of life, and, while being highly skilled, fluent in English, economically affluent, socially confident and enthusiastic in establishing social relations, still had significant difficulties in establishing friendship networking with the local, non-migrant population. That means that high levels of professional integration, participation, and business networking do not necessarily coincide with the same levels of social connections. Amongst the major obstacles to establishing close social ties were the lack of reliability, emotional intensity, and trust. Despite relatively weak levels of social integration, the skilled immigrants in the study, nevertheless, did not intend to change the country of their residence, considering economic opportunities as more important than their social life. It was argued, however, that the dynamics of relationships and attachments can change over time, especially with changing needs and priorities of skilled immigrants (Ryan & Mullholland, 2015).

2.2.5 Studies on skilled immigrants in Australian context

From the literature in the field of skilled immigration in Australia, it emerges that, though the majority of studies are focussed on examination and analysis of difficulties and opportunities for utilisation of immigrants' professional skills, there is a growing body of research exploring social and personal dimensions of skilled immigration and representatives of this category of immigrants. For example, Ho (2006) researched the social dimensions of immigration, examining the experiences of skilled Hong Kong-born female immigrants living in Sydney, Australia. The data elicited in interviews with the researcher demonstrated that, despite being highly educated with a strong employment history, the participants experienced "de-skilling" after migration to Australia, accepting lower positions or completely changing occupations or industries. Only half of the participants entered the paid workforce in a position relevant to their professional field, while some participants conformed to the new and often not desirable roles of housewives and house keepers. It was also evident that migration led the skilled women towards identifying themselves less as "career women" but developing other aspects of their identity, pursuing their interests and a lifestyle in a new country. Ho (2006) argues that

in this study, skilled immigrants' decisions to move away from their professional orientation were not always "free choices", but were "adaptations to limited [employment] opportunities" (p. 14), and could be considered as a "labour market failure" (p. 13). Ho (2006) concludes that immigration took the participants in the study "away" from their "market-based" identities, and calls for more research on investigation of complex skilled immigrants' experiences during the process of settling in Australia.

A similar qualitative study by Limpangog (2011) examined the social dimensions of lives of 20 highly skilled female Filipinas who migrated to Australia during the past 25 years. The study explored how the intersection of gender, race, and class during the migration and resettlement processes enabled and compelled the participants in the study to reconfigure their lives and identities. Data revealed that the migration trajectories of the participants were linked to their perceived declining middle-class position and their desire to regain their social standing in their new country of residence.

Using a critical feminist approach to data analysis, Limpangog (2011) found that the complex inseparability of work and family for the female participants in the study influenced their identity reconstructions. Encountering challenges in the public realm, workforce barriers, racial and gender discrimination at workforce and at home, the participants were, however, able to utilise a range of personal resources to reconfigure their identities across all the realms. Limpangog (2011) argues that the migration process has had little transformative effect on the participants' cultural expectations, and the dominating ethnic Filipinas ideology of mothering as the main women's task. Limpangog (2011) concludes that the participants in the research were able to successfully reconstitute their careers without succumbing to long-term underemployment or workplace discrimination.

Roberts (2011) examined relocation experiences of 35 highly skilled and mobile professionals who were either born in Australia and migrated to other countries, or came to Australia as immigrants. This study positions Australia as both the immigrant receiving and sending country, and explores experiences of participants ranged 30-60 years old from diverse language, cultural, gender, and professional backgrounds. Roberts (2011) argues that skilled professionals often cannot be conceptualised in terms of affiliation with a particular diasporic, or even with an ethnic group, as some of them experienced

multiple resettlements, and their membership is multiple, cross-cutting, and changing over time. Neither can they be defined in terms of channel of migration, such as skilled immigrant, refugee, international student, as over time people shift from one migrant category to another (e.g. from expatriate to skilled immigrant). Roberts (2011) argues for the examination of people's experiences outside official skilled immigrant and human capital discourses. She points out that immigrants' senses of belonging (or not belonging) to the new environment, and their decision to stay permanently or temporarily in their new country of residence are impacted by their subjective emotional experiences as much as by the policies and regulations.

Roberts (2011) further argues that empirical research on human mobility often focusses on communities of people defined by their nationality, and usually takes a linear dimension in studying skilled immigrants' labour outcomes, their professional environment, and their negotiation of immigration policies. Acknowledging professional engagement as an integral part of skilled professionals' experiences, Roberts (2011) calls for an examination of a range of experiences, trajectories, attachments, work contexts, and complex cultural affiliations accompanying the process of immigration.

In a recent case study, Sardana, Zhu, and Veen (2016) investigated experiences of the professional job search by 24 highly skilled immigrants from China and India. The question of how these skilled migrants interpreted organisational (employer) attitudes towards them, and perceived the role of various government institutions in the process of immigration were also examined.

From semi-structured interviews the study found that participants often had high expectations regarding their employment opportunities after resettlement. The participants reported perceived devaluation of their qualifications and previous work experiences by Australian accreditation bodies. Of ten participants, who were employed in Australia at the time of the study, five managed to secure top or middle positions in professional fields, while five took low or upper-low vacancies, sometimes in unskilled sectors. Sardana, Zhu, and Veen (2016) point out overall negative feedback from the participants of the study regarding their transfer to the new settings, and argue that skilled immigrants' expectations and government's immigration policies are not consistent with one another. Sardana, Zhu, and Veen (2016) argue further that fragmented and unsuitable employment of skilled immigrants result in their poor local social networks, limited

career prospects, and a lack of trust between skilled immigrants and representatives of host society. Sardana, Zhu, and Veen (2016) conclude with suggestions for the improvement of skilled immigrants' integration to new professional environments, such as initiatives of short-term employment to gain local work experience, the assistance of human resources (HR) specialists, and opportunities to upgrade their credentials via educational institutions.

Recently emerged research such as Sardana, Zhu, and Veen's (2016) study, indicates the importance of attention to the micro-level of immigration, which includes the level of personal experiences and multiple individual identities of skilled immigrants. It becomes apparent that skilled immigrants' individual experiences during the transitional period to their new professional and social environments need to be considered as an important factor for a successful settlement in the process of immigration. The present doctoral study (commenced in 2012) addresses this need by examining the impact that the processes of seeking work, adjusting, and adapting to the new settings have on skilled immigrants' professional and social identities. The study of reported experiences of skilled immigrants from a variety of language and cultural backgrounds allows for investigation of diverse linguistic resources and communicative strategies which they use for (re)construction and negotiation of their sense of selves in their new country of residence.

2.3 Conclusion

This literature review examined several key studies in the field of adult migrants' identity formation, as well as some other studies of skilled immigrants from NESBs relevant to the present study and its aims. The concept of identity is defined as multiple, adaptable, dependent on, and negotiated differently in, various contexts. Identity is constructed in dialogical relationships with immediate interlocutors, as well as with other people, who may be not present during such interactions. Identity emerges as narratively presented and performed through a variety of linguistic and non-linguistic devices, and is referred to as a site of struggle (Darvin & Norton, 2015), as immigrants' identities can be negatively impacted by ideologies and the structures of power of the receiving society,

forcing immigrants to take other identity positions, from which they can (re)negotiate their sense of self.

The literature demonstrates that the professional dimension of identity is particularly relevant to the category of skilled immigrants, who are the focus of the present study. Seeking professional and social participation, the path to which lays through workplace (Remennick, 2013), skilled immigrants make different types of investments. These investments, not just in learning languages, but in acquiring and accumulating different types of capital, and in establishing social networks with different groups of people, emerge as skilled immigrants' accommodative strategies and methods to achieve their professional and social goals. It also emerges that these investments require skilled immigrants to (re)negotiate their sense of selves in their new social, professional, and cultural settings.

While the existing body of international and Australian research on skilled immigrants is still largely focussed on examination of this group from an economic and statistical point of view (Beeb & Bauder, 2015; Remennick, 2013; Roberts, 2011), there is an emerging number of studies on the social and personal dimensions of immigration (Ho, 2006; Roberts, 2011; Sardana, Zhu, & Veen, 2016). Most of the studies on skilled immigrants in Australia (and worldwide) typically involve examination of clusters of immigrants either from the same ethnic or national grouping, or of the same gender, while studies on skilled immigrants from diverse language and cultural backgrounds are rare. There is little attention paid to the examination of people's changing self-perceptions during the time of and due to their transition into their new environment, and limited research on the accommodative and adjustment strategies, that they use to incorporate themselves into their new professional and social settings. Furthermore, researchers argue that not only the questions of immigrants' professional and social participation, but also the *negotiation* of their participation in various segments of life using an additional language should be examined (Block, 2007; Norton & McKinney, 2011).

To sum up, it becomes evident that there is a gap in the existing body of international, as well as Australian research on skilled immigrants, and a predominantly economic approach to the phenomenon of skilled immigration does not address the complex issues constituting this process. Limited research has been conducted on exploration of people's experiences and their professional and social identities during the process of immigration though these factors emerge as significant components of a successful settling in the new country. There is a lack of research on the ways that people negotiate their participation in different domains of life in their second or additional language (Norton & McKinney, 2011; Wagner, 2004). To address this gap, the present study is focussed on an examination of skilled immigrants' discursive construction of their senses of selves in relation to different domains of life during the time of their transition to the new environments, as well as on the process of their adjustment and adaptation to their new professional, cultural, and social settings.

CHAPTER 3: REVIEW OF THEORETICAL APPROACHES AND CONCEPTS

Introduction

The theoretical framework provides the overall approach and key constructs for the present study including narrative, language, identity, and the relationships between them, as well as the concepts used for framing the analysis of these constructs and their interrelationships. The theoretical framework adopted here is situated within socio-cultural and critical theories of language and identity (Bakhtin, 1981, 1984, 1986; Bourdieu, 1977, 1991; De Fina & Georgakopoulou, 2008, 2015), with the focus on immigrants' narrative identity construction and negotiation in a second language context. Within these theories narratives become the central aspect of analysis which is adopted in this study (Bamberg, 2006, 2010; Baynham, 2006, 2011; De Fina, 2003, 2006, 2009; De Fina & Georgakopoulou, 2012, 2015).

From these theoretical perspectives, identity is seen as socially constructed and negotiated in interactive relationships (De Fina, 2009), with language as the fundamental resource available for the cultural production of identity (Bucholtz & Hall, 2004). Language is recognized here as "a central tool for the strategic enactment of multiple subject positions" (Pavlenko & Blackledge, 2004, p. 96). Individuals activate their linguistic repertoires according to particular aspects of their social identities in particular settings, which might include various social networks and communities of practice.

The present study draws on the understanding that construction of identity is a process that occurs both in real interaction between the immediate interlocutors, as well as in a virtual or invoked interaction. This process includes the construction of social identity between the characters, plot, and the location of the narrative in accordance with the speakers' goals and purposes and available linguistic and paralinguistic resources. It is acknowledged that it is social, cultural and socio-political discourses that regulate the resources available for use in the ongoing process of identity construction in a variety of specific contexts (Block, 2007; Jenkins, 2008). This interconnection between language and its available resources and identity emergence becomes particularly sensitive in relation to immigrants' narrative identity construction, as the availability or pragmatic use

of linguistic resources can be challenging in conditions of different social and cultural environment.

Since identities are inextricably linked with practices and resources in a particular context (Norton & Toohey, 2011), linguistic practices and resources have to be explored in order to establish how individuals construct and negotiate their identities in narrative genre. The following section provides a discussion of theoretical approaches employed in the examination of emergent skilled immigrants' identities in this study.

3. 1 Current views on narrative

De Fina (2003) argues that “[l]anguage ... is not a reflection of our apprehension of reality ... but rather a constitutive aspect of our experience of the world” (p. 5), and “... language, and in particular narrative, displays its power to voice experiences, to bring about shared understandings of life events, to shape and transform individual and collective realities” (p. 1). In this sense, narrative can be seen as “a method, a mode of inquiry into the human realm” (Freeman, 2015, p. 22).

Time and chronological sequences are considered as longstanding hallmarks of narratives. Freeman (2015) emphasises the “retrospective dimension” of narratives, which “always and necessary entail looking backward, from some present moments, and seeing in the movements of events episodes that are part of some larger whole” (p. 27). Bakhtin (1986) highlights the need “to understand necessary connections between ... [the] past and the living present, to understand the necessary place of this past in the unbroken line of historical development” (p. 33). The retrospective dimension of narratives constructs both historicity and chronological order, while containing a pathway into dimensions of meaning.

The concept of space has emerged in literature as another narrative structuring principle and a point of reference for narrative action. However, space is not seen as static and limited, but interconnected with time; this interconnectedness is captured by Bakhtin's notion of “chronotope” (1986). Both time and space are fundamental resources for structuring and indexing actions and conveying different kinds of identities (Baynham, 2015; De Fina & Georgakopoulou, 2015).

In connections with time-space and sequential orientations, narratives are seen as “shaped by ... previous talk and action” of intended audience (De Fina & Georgakopoulou, 2008b, p. 381). “Both the ‘telling of a story’ and the ‘ways, in which it is told’ are embedded within the local context and “surrounding discourse activity” (De Fina & Georgakopoulou, 2008, p. 381). Narratives shape and are shaped by contexts, as well as by ideologies, social relations and social agendas in different communities, times and spaces (De Fina & Georgakopoulou, 2015). Therefore, narratives are viewed as talk-in-interaction and as social practice, when locally occasioned narrative-interactional processes are connected with larger social processes (De Fina & Georgakopoulou, 2008b, p. 381).

Recent approaches to narrative analysis have focussed on the multiplicity, fragmentation and “irreducible situatedness” of narrative forms and functions within social interaction (De Fina & Georgakopoulou, 2008a, p. 275). Attention is drawn to examination of both “big” (canonical) and “small” stories, which are frequently dismissed in traditional identity inquiry though they afford investigation of often under-represented aspects of identity work (Bamberg & Georgakopoulou, 2008; De Fina & Georgakopoulou, 2008a, 2008b; Georgakopoulou, 2011).

Freeman (2015) defines “big stories” as “... narratives, often derived from interviews ... that entail a significant measure of reflection on either an event or experience, a significant portion of a life, or the whole of it” (p. 27). He argues that the retrospective dimension is most visible in big narratives, but can also be seen in small stories (Freeman, 2006, 2015). Definitions of a “big”, or canonic, narrative seem to embrace several distinguishable features, such as temporality, causality and evaluation. “Temporality” refers to the events or facts of the story being perceived as linked through a time related sequence, sometimes fragmented and displaced (Hoffmann, 2010; Taylor, 2007). “Causality” refers to understanding that story events in narratives are usually (but not necessarily) linked by causal relations. “Evaluation” is present in a narrative when it includes and transports a personal stance or evaluative factor in the events of the story (Labov & Waletzky, 1967; Hoffmann, 2010; Taylor, 2007).

In the present study it is acknowledged that narratives are not detached, autonomous and self-contained units with distinctly classifiable parts. On contrary, it is argued, after Ochs and Capps (2001) and Georgakopoulou (2011) that instead of identifying narratives as always possessing a set of distinguished features (discussed above), narratives are rather approached as having various “dimensions”, which may not always be manifested but are nevertheless relevant to them, both as texts and activity (Georgakopoulou, 2011, p. 408). These dimensions include tellability, tellership, linearity, and moral stance, and each dimension establishes a range of possibilities, which may or may not be realised in a particular narrative, thus pointing to a definition of narrative as “not an all-or-nothing matter but a more-or-less matter” (Georgakopoulou, 2011, p. 408).

Within this approach to narratives, “small stories” are defined as fragmented unfolding accounts, embedded in local contexts, and characterised by “non- or multi-linear events ... [in the context of] telling of...ordinary, everyday events” (Georgakopoulou, 2015, p. 260). Bamberg (2010) argues that it is in the small stories of everyday occasions in which tellers affirm a sense of who they are and in which navigating and connecting temporal continuity and discontinuity, self and other differentiation, and the direction of fit between person and world take place. Georgakopoulou (2015) claims that small stories announce and immediately share experience and confer meaning of this experience, leading to the emergence of diverse identities as “selves-in-the making” rather than “settled and reflected-upon” (p. 268).

Regardless of the type of narrative, it is argued that life stories and narratives of personal experience are “pivotal to a rich and nuanced understanding of social phenomena” (De Fina, 2009, pp. 233-234). In relation to immigration, narrative discourse is “particularly illuminating of ways in which immigrants represent the migration process and themselves in it” (De Fina, 2003, p. 5). Freeman (2015) argues that narrative is “the most natural and appropriate means” available for examination of movements of individuals’ lives (p. 30), as expressed through language. The present approach to language, discourse and their interconnectedness with narration is discussed in the following section.

3. 2 Language, discourse and narration

Current understandings of language reflect the view that it comprises “dynamic constellations of socio-cultural resources that are fundamentally tied to their social and historical contexts” (Hall, Vitanova, & Marchenkova, 2005, p. 2), rather than being a stable, universal, autonomous system with a fixed set of structural components and a static set of rules. This accords with Bakhtin’s view of language as the vibrant and constantly changing “chain of texts” of a speech community (1986, p. 105).

According to Bakhtin (1981), “[t]he dialogic orientation of discourse is a phenomenon that is ... a property of *any* discourse”, and “... the internal dialogism of the word ... occurs in a monologic utterance as well as in a rejoinder” (p. 279, italics in original). Every word is directly oriented towards a future “answer-word”, towards “responsive” and “actual” understanding of meaning, which is composed of “specific objects and emotional expressions”, such as “contradictory opinions, points of view and value judgments” (Bakhtin, 1981, p. 281).

The speaker, striving to “get a reading on his own word, and on his own conceptual system that determines this word”, counts in this on his/her recipient’s understanding and response, and constructs the utterance “against ... the listener’s apperceptive background” (Bakhtin, 1981, p. 282). Therefore, “... the unique experience of each individual is shaped and developed in continuous and constant interaction with other’s individual utterances” (Bakhtin, 1986, p. 89). This is the interactional character of relationships between the self and the other, which determines an internal dialogism of the word in “the primordial dialogism of discourse” (Bakhtin, 1981, p. 275) that is a localized dialogue. At the same time, Bakhtin’s notion of the dialogism is grounded in understanding that linguistic practices are shaped not only “by the inherent addressivity of discourse” (Strauss, Feiz, Xiang & Ivanova, 2006, p. 187) but are based on, and shaped by, prior discourses. That means that any word and any utterance is designed as a response to a preceding or potential word or utterance, and they are inextricably connected to a “complex network” of other texts and utterances (Strauss, Feiz, Xiang & Ivanova, 2006, p. 187), creating intertextual relations between any texts.

Bakhtin (1981) distinguishes between the “local dialogue”, which involves “face-to-face vocalized verbal communication between persons” (Voloshinov, 1973, p. 95), and “generalized collective dialogue”. Wertsch (2006) defines the latter as “ongoing, potentially society-wide interchanges”, which “reflect the voice of others, including entire groups, who are not present in the immediate speech situation” (p. 61). The “voices of others” that have been experienced and accumulated in contribution to previous and immediate communication demands and imagined prospects may be invoked in conversations and function as a means of negotiating the self.

For Bakhtin (1981), “[e]very conversation is full of transmissions and interpretations” of other people’s voices, in the form of quotations and references to both indefinite and general sources of information (p. 338). The word never belongs solely to the speaker, it is always “half someone else’s” and [i]t becomes “one’s own” only when the speaker populates it with his own intention, his own accent, when he appropriates the word, adapting it to his own semantic and expressive intention” (Bakhtin, 1981, p. 293).

Wertsch (2006) claims that Bakhtin’s understanding of words, being half someone else’s, applies to language, not to texts or utterances, thus involving a level of language phenomena that “exists as collectively shared social facts about the organisation of utterances”. Acts of communication, according to Blommaert (2007), are all “uniquely contextualized, one-time phenomena” (p. 3) but at the same time, they are intrinsically coherent with previous traditions of making sense, and connected to shared, enduring patterns of understanding. This duality, in which language “occurs both as an individual, one-time and unique phenomenon, and simultaneously as a collective and relatively stable phenomenon” (Blommaert, 2007, p. 3), has been described in the literature as “micro” and “macro” levels of language (Blommaert, 2015).

The “micro” level of language involves, basically, “two actual people talking to each other in a specific dialogue at a particular time and in a particular place” (Holquist, 1981, p. XX), thus pointing to the local occasioning of spoken interactions and the level of analysis, examining “how people affect language” (Blommaert, 2015, p. 3). However, according to Bakhtin (1981), each of the interlocutors, involved in discursive work, in sending messages to each other, will draw upon all possible existing language practices

and specific mixes of socio-cultural discourses, which best mediate their own intentions in this specific exchange, thus connecting locally occurring communicative acts with discourses on a global, socio cultural and socio historical – “macro” level, level of a generalised dialogue, “where language effects people” (Blommaert, 2015, p. 3). The interconnectedness of local and global discourses might be particularly evident in the context of immigration, where the negotiation of self might occur through the process of blending and mixing of various social and linguistic practices and resources.

3.2.1 Genre

Generalised dialogue is shaped by specific genres, which comprise “the routine and socio-culturally shaped ways of acting and expressing particular orders of knowledge and experience” (De Fina & Georgakopoulou, 2008, p. 383), therefore, genre allows the examination of the relationship between actions of individual agents and the influence of a culture, society or institution. Miller (1994), after Giddens (1981, 1984), points out that “individual communicative action and social system structure each other and interact with each other”, and an “individual must reproduce patterned notions of others, institutional or social others, and ... society or culture must provide structures by which individuals can do this” (Miller, 1994, p. 61).

In order to communicate effectively, individuals must create a recognisable structure, for themselves and others, must schematise existential situations, must interpret or “indexicalize” the “inherently equivocal” confusion of possibilities in which they find themselves (Cohen, 1987, p. 292). This “confusion of possibilities” might be even more challenging for individuals who communicate in a second language and in the context of structurally different social and linguistic organisation, when the issue of awareness and availability of structures and shared inferences and interpretations becomes problematic.

Slembrouck (2011) calls to “talk about genres which are better understood as ordered in transnational spaces of circulation (through processes of borrowing, appropriation, imposition and translation”, but not as “contained by a societally-defined community of practice” (p. 160). Slembrouck (2011) argues further that “the questions of relative homogeneity [of genres] across transnational landscapes and/or relative susceptibility to local adaptation and recontextualisation ... undermine often-held assumptions that

generic variation is mostly to be situated inside the space of a particular language or a community” (p. 161), thus supporting the claim that genres can transform into new generic forms recognisable within a given culture (Crane, 2006, p. 229). That means that individuals are capable of blending various genres to negotiate and achieve their targets.

In conditions of transnationally different social, professional and linguistic environments, individuals construct structures and generic forms through borrowing, appropriating, and interpreting societal structures that exist in the target community in order to achieve their goals and negotiate their emergent identities through different practices and within various groupings. Rampton (2006) describes genres as “a set of conventionalized expectations that members of a social group or network use to shape and construe the communicative activity that they are engaged in” (p. 128).

Genre can also be defined as the “operational site of joint, reproducible social action, the nexus between private and public, singular and recurrent, micro and macro” (Miller, 1994, p. 62), as it connects linguistic signs and social processes. The transition from the “micro” to the “macro” level in communications, also connecting the linguistic and the social, can be seen through a “performative account of space/time relations in narrative” (Baynham, 2015, p. 9), based on Bakhtin’s concept of chronotope (1981, 1986).

3.2.2 Chronotope and timespace scales

Chronotope (literally “timespace”), introduced by Bakhtin (1981, 1986) and developed further by Blommaert (2007, 2010, 2015), refers “to the intrinsic blending of space and time in any event in the real world” (Blommaert, 2015, p. 2), “the inseparability of time and space in human social action” (p. 7). Chronotope points to the connection between historical and momentary actions and the availability of past contexts, which might be invoked in relevant contexts in discourse. The dynamics of the presentation of the contexts is revealed through various spatio-temporal frames (scales), ideologically configured and indexically deployed by the participants involved in the narrative discourse (Blommaert, 2015).

The movements between different scales are marked with the communicative shifts between the individual and the collective, the temporally situated and the trans temporal,

the unique and the common, the token and the type, the specific and the general (Blommaert & Dong, 2010). Blommaert (2010) argues that the connection between these scales is “indexical”, in the way in which instances of communication can be captured indexically as “framed” understandable communication, pointing towards social and cultural norms, genres, traditions, expectations - phenomena of a higher scale-level.

This is in line with De Fina and Georgakopoulou’s (2012) claim that narration can be seen as a social activity, which reflects and constructs social meanings not only within specific settings, but also through recourse to the different aspects of local and global contexts (p. 56). This also accords with Schiffrin’s (1996) argument that when people articulate their experiences in narratives, they do it through recourse to cultural knowledge and expectations, situating that experience globally (p. 168). Therefore, in structuring of time, and place, and narrative identity, chronotope functions as a link between the narrative content and the local, social, cultural, and historical (temporal) contexts of the narrating action (Perrino, 2015), and this link is indexical.

3.2.3 Indexicals

Ochs (1992) points out that linguistic structures are associated with social categories not always directly, but often indirectly, through a chain of semiotic associations. The process of pairing of utterances with extralinguistic categories has been called indexicality (Silverstein, 1976) based on the idea that symbols (not only linguistic ones) “index”, or point to something that is external to them. Indexicality is a central concept, which captures the process of connecting linguistic elements to social and material or temporal meanings during the ongoing process of meaning creating.

De Fina and Georgakopoulou (2012) argue that the symbolic processes, such as words, sounds, expressions, and styles are associated with qualities, ideas, and social representations, which, in turn, relate to social groups and categories, sharing and representing them in the process of meaning creation (p. 176). It is acknowledged that sets of indexicals “operate along each other in ways that suggest socio-cultural coherence” (Blommaert, Westinen, & Leppanen, 2015, p. 123). Therefore, “orders of indexicality define the dominant lines for senses of belonging, for identities and roles in

society; and thus underlie what Goffman called the “interaction order” – which is an indexical order (Blommaert & Dong, 2010, p. 368).

Indexical judgments are primarily local, and when indexical elements move through space, they may change value and meaning, as linguistic resources may change their function and value, when moving through different trajectories (Blommaert & Dong, 2010, pp. 381-382). As Blommaert and Dong (2010) put it, “[b]ig and small differences in language use locate the speaker in particular indexical ascriptive categories – that is, categories that ascribe an identity and a role” (pp. 368-369). The relationship between the language and identity and the factors which impact on this relationship are examined in the following section.

3. 3 Language and identity: discursive practices, positioning in narratives and performance

3.3.1 Discursive practices and positioning in narratives

The present study draws on an approach to the construction of identity that recognises it as thoroughly tied to social practice and interaction as a flexible and contextually contingent resource; never fixed but always open to change; fractured and multifaceted in complex, contradictory ways; and tied to processes of differentiation from other identified groups (Block, 2007; Clarke, 2008; De Fina et al., 2006; De Fina & Georgakopoulou, 2015; Norton & Toohey, 2011). As products of a social action, situated both in the flow of conversation as well as in the narrative itself, identities may shift and recombine to meet new circumstances (Bucholtz & Hall, 2004, p. 376).

Identity construction is a process that is always embedded in social practices (Foucault, 1984), thus discourse practices have a central role within the process of identity construction and expression (De Fina et al., 2006; Fairclough, 1989). As Davies and Harré (1990) put it, “discursive practices constitute the speakers and hearers in certain ways and yet at the same time are a resource through which speakers and hearers can negotiate new positions” (p. 7). Therefore, positioning is seen as “the discursive process whereby people are located in conversations as observably and subjectively coherent participants in jointly produced storylines” (p. 37).

Though Davies and Harré (1990) view positioning as largely a conversational phenomenon, Pavlenko and Blackledge (2004) argue that the meaning of positioning can be expanded to all discursive practices, which may position individuals in particular ways or allow individuals to position themselves. Thus, positioning theory (Davies & Harré, 1990; Harré & van Langenhove, 1999) allows bringing together the view of identities as located in discourses and as situated in narratives (Pavlenko & Blackledge, 2004).

Positioning through linguistically realised action and interactions with others can be understood as temporary identity, discussed or taken by a speaker, which becomes both who the speaker is seen to be by others, and the perspective from which she or he sees the world and is able to negotiate new positions (Davies & Harré, 1990). As Georgakopoulou (2011) put it, “[a] relational self ...would derive its capacity for self-perception and self-definition through relations with others and in interactional negotiation with others” (p. 403).

The idea of positioning is connected with the double temporal logic or chronology of narrative: that is of the told world (the world of the story) and of the telling world (the here-and-now storytelling world), where speakers position themselves and where they “draw strategically on the opportunities afforded ... for self-presentation” (De Fina & Georgakopoulou, 2012, p. 164). Georgakopoulou (2006) argues that “the meeting point” of narrative and identity can be found in the narrators’ storytelling roles.

Social positioning that happens in speech through linguistic forms can be explored using Bakhtin's concepts of voice, double voicing and ventriloquation (Wortham & Locher, 1999; Wortham, 2001). While double voicing articulates a narrator’s own voice through interaction with the voice of another speaker, ventriloquation allows speakers to position themselves and interlocutors with respect to others’ voices by not speaking directly in their own voices (Wortham, 2001, p. 67).

Where the speaker/narrator is positioning her/himself in relation to the immediate interlocutor, s/he is also positioning the interlocutor and her/himself in relation to other voices introduced in the “dialogue”, what is in effect, a “three way” dialogue. This is not

just the construction of a position through the mechanism of indexed voices, but also a re-constructing of the relationship with those indexed voices in the new contexts. Thus, ventriloquation and double voicing can be described as a processes of acquiring, combining and expressing discursive voices that have been previously experienced and accumulated, while being a means of identifying and negotiating the self.

However, it is argued that while certain aspects of identity may be negotiable in certain contexts, others may be less so, since individuals may be positioned by dominant groups and power structures in ways they did not choose (Davies & Harré, 1990). Bourdieu (1984) viewed linguistic practices as fundamental to creating status distinctions that centre on cultural capital and as a tool legitimated and valued by the dominant culture, when, according to Darvin and Norton (2015) people's linguistic resources are measured against a value system of the larger socio-cultural context and when socially-structured indexicalities link ways of speaking to social groups, specific settings, and ideological conditions that define them.

Therefore, there are “overarching norms”, dictated by the power-holders, regarding the value attributed to cultural and linguistic resources (among other resources) (Irvin, 2011, p. 105). Nevertheless, it is argued that individuals can act as “free-thinking agents” (Irvin, 2011, p. 105), consciously contesting dominant ideologies and creating desired identities in narratives, where the concepts of performativity and performance (Bruner, 1990) emerge as a means to present and negotiate desired identities in narratives.

3.3.2 Performance

Bucholtz and Hall (2004) point out that there is “an element of deliberate action...in performances that challenge or subvert dominant ideologies” (p. 381). Even though it is argued that identity depends on ideology to be recognised as legitimate, and most performances are repetitions of dominant practices, the concepts of performativity and performance allow for “bringing social world into being through the notion of individual agency” (Bucholtz & Hall, 2004, p. 381).

Kulick (2003) distinguishes performance and performativity, noting that “performance is something a subject does. Performativity, on the other hand, is the process through which

the subject emerges” (p. 140). According to E. Miller (2012), “...local performances are necessary for taken-for-granted social realities to be performatively constituted, but such performances do not constitute social reality in a historical vacuum. Rather, they re-sediment conventions of earlier iterations of discursive practices and thus serve as occasions for reconstituting social ideologies about language and [language] learner subjectivity” (p. 89).

According to Bucholtz and Hall (2004), performance is “highly deliberate and self-aware social display” (p. 380), as the concepts of performativity and performance often involve stylization, the highlighting and exaggeration of ideological associations. Therefore, “[p]erformance is the highlighting of ideology through the foregrounding of practice” (p. 381). Performance serves as a means to present and negotiate an image of self and others as the characters of story worlds without directly naming the characters, and in self-representing, people usually display selves (Bruner, 1990) through the form, content, and the performance of the narrative (Schiffrin, 1996).

Therefore, positioning represents a process of socialisation of knowledge and rules in terms of the installation of social roles (De Fina & Georgakopoulou, 2015), while performance devices and narrative resources allow speakers to occupy different positions both at local and more global level, thus providing insights into the process of creation of these social relations through the discourse (De Fina et al., 2006). It is argued that the notion of performance is the key concept to establish the cultural embedding of narratives (De Fina & Georgakopoulou, 2012).

Summarising what is discussed above, the discursive approach to the relationship between language and identity is mutually constitutive in several ways: firstly, languages, or rather particular language practices, supply the terms and linguistic means by which identities are constructed and negotiated; secondly, ideologies of language and identity determine ways in which individuals use linguistic and paralinguistic resources to index their identities (Pavlenko & Blackledge, 2004). It is argued that ideologies of “culturally intelligible identities” emerge from individuals’ habitual practices (Bucholtz & Hall, 2004, p. 380). Social and linguistic practices and the sites where they take place are discussed in the following section.

3. 4 Habitus, investment, and communities of practice

3.4.1 Habitus and forms of capital

According to Bourdieu (1977), language, along with other social practices, shapes people's way of being in the world, their "habitus". As Bourdieu (1984) formulated, habitus is "the socialized body that is progressively inscribed with social structure in the course of individual and collective history" (p. 6). It is through the habitus that material conditions become translated into human dispositions (Irvin, 2011, p. 105), and habitus is shaped by repetition of specific practices. The practices which constitute the habitus "are culturally reified... and...associated with differential values as 'symbolic capital' " (Bucholtz & Hall, 2004, pp. 377-378).

The notion of symbolic capital comprises several components. "Social capital" refers to the network and relationships with other people valued in regards to their "social standing"; "cultural capital" relates to accumulating forms of knowledge; "physical capital" applies to personal physical characteristics of individuals, whereas "linguistic capital" refers to a way person speaks (Irvin, 2011, p. 104). Individuals use various forms of symbolic capital as resources to construct their identities (Irvin, 2011).

It is argued that different forms of capital accumulate over time (Mallinson, 2011), and the symbolic capital individuals possess can serve as affordances for gaining specific material or symbolic benefits. In moving transnationally, people are expected not only to acquire new resources, but also to use their existing capital and transform it "into something that is regarded as valuable" in new contexts (Darvin & Norton, 2015, p. 45).

In relation to linguistic capital in the case of immigration, the repertoire, which individuals develop through their life experience potentially conjoins the repertoire of linguistic resources available in new spaces (Darvin & Norton, 2015). In presenting and negotiating their identities, people draw on available linguistic and non-linguistic resources, which "derive from the repeated language practices of the people involved in the sets of activities related to particular places" (Pennycook & Otsuji, 2014, p. 166). Blommaert and Dong (2010) argue that the function and value of linguistic resources is

affected by spatial trajectories and change when people move geographically (p. 382), thus pointing to the flexible nature of linguistic resources, being the linguistic capital people possess.

Linguistic capital of individuals is often considered as a dichotomy between their oral and literacy skills, which are not usually equally developed (Snow, 1987). It is argued that basic interpersonal communication skills (BICS) (Cummins, 1979a, 2000, 2008) are relatively quickly adopted and applied by immigrants in their new cultural and linguistic environments (Krumm & Plutzar, 2008). By contrast, the more complex ways of communication, such as reading and writing, which involve cognitive academic language proficiency (CALP) (Cummins, 1979a), require a much longer developmental course from learners of languages (Snow, 1987). That means that immigrant's linguistic capital, e.g. certain second language styles and registers, might be underdeveloped and devalued, being measured against a value system reflecting the larger sociocultural and linguistic context (Darvin & Norton, 2015).

While immigrants' linguistic capital may not be accorded symbolic value by structures of power, as the habitus is shaped by prevailing ideologies, it is argued that individuals have agency (within limits, however) to attempt acquiring particular forms of capital for "particular kinds of experience, status ... or other forms of capital" (Irvin, 2011, p. 105). It is the desire to become a member of community (sometimes imagined) or acquire a coveted identity that enables individuals to act agentively, and it is through desire and imagination that people are able to invest in practices that can transform their lives (Darvin & Norton, 2015, p. 46).

3.4.2 Investment and social networking

The concept of investment in learning language was originally introduced "to make a meaningful connection between the learners' desire and commitment to learn a language, and their changing identity" (Norton, 2010, p. 354). Darvin and Norton (2015) defined identity as "... a struggle of habitus and desire, of competing ideologies and imagined identities" (p. 45), thus pointing to multiple aspects which influence the process of language learners' identity formation. The concept of investment recently evolved as a model, comprising the concepts of identity, ideology and capital (Darvin & Norton,

2015). Through the investment into various practices and the performance of these practices individuals can not only gain entry to and participate in multiple spaces and contexts, but also transform these spaces. Social networking is one of the sites, where people “invest” in order to achieve their personal goals.

Vetter (2011), drawing on Homans’s (1958, cited in Vetter, p.210) exchange theory, argues that social networks emerge from repeated exchanges between individuals, and this transactional exchange can be of a material or a symbolic nature. Milroy (1980), distinguishing between personal and interactive networks, points out that personal exchange networks consists of persons between whom individual exchanges carry aid, advice, criticism or support, whereas interactive networks are only based on frequent interaction and not on the exchange of material or symbolic resources. Thus, social network is seen as a mechanism for exchanging goods and services, as well for imposing obligations and conferring privileges (Vetter, 2011, p. 210). The relationships within any kind of networks can be seen as a resource that may be useful for individuals involved in these networks and their practices (Vetter, 2011, p. 210).

In relation to immigration, Valenta (2009) points to selective social networking, cultural hybridity and ties of different strengths with the members of the host community as the major features of the process of immigrants’ incorporation into the host society. Valenta (2009) claims that people’s engagement in active and selective rearrangement of social relations with the representatives of the host communities and their own ethnic groups depends on which group they want to be associated with, and this is expressed in immigrants’ ethnic-social preferences and “the sociable intensity” they have with different social groups (p. 177). Valenta (2009) argues that, among other things, immigrants’ identity negotiations may lead to “bifurcation” of their personal social networks and possible “network fragmentation” (p. 193), meaning weak socialisation.

For some immigrants, network fragmentation may form part of their identity world and may be an important prerequisite for integration into mainstream society (Valenta, 2009). However, for others the preferred option is to maintain “reconcilable hybrid identities that depend on careful selective networking and continuous syncretic identity work” (Valenta, 2009, p. 193). Valenta (2009) argues further that it is not just immigrants’ agency and

selectivity that drive engagement with the members and practices of the mainstream community that play a role, but also “the context of reception”, such as a government’s policies, societal attitudes towards immigrants and the qualities of the immigrant community itself that impact on the process of immigrants’ involvement in relations and practices of the host country.

Noels, Yashima and Zhang (2011) point out that immigrants’ participation in the practices of the host-national community “means, in a sense, acculturating through acquiring normative behaviours or symbolic competences in that community”, and the “expanded behavioural repertoires in multiple languages and cultures can result in a wider range of identity options to choose from, and can affect how effectively an individual can manage identities in intercultural communication” (p. 55). However, the actual practice in which people are involved may significantly differ from imagined practices constructed on “the basis of perceived and literalized metaphorical resemblance between language and social organisation” (Bucholtz & Hall, 2004, p. 380). Communities of practice and various groups’ memberships as the sites of identity negotiation and their role in this process are discussed in more details in the following section.

3.4.3 Communities of practice and group membership in immigrants’ identity formation

Language and linguistic practices are embedded in activities within various social groupings, which people elect to engage and be affiliated with and where they acquire communicative and other cultural competences (Bucholtz & Hall, 2004; Wenger, 1998). Communities of practice are a smaller unit than networks and can be characterised by mutual engagement, a jointly negotiated enterprise and a shared repertoire (Vetter, 2011). They can be considered as a specific kind of local network (Meyerhoff, 2009, p. 289), and constitute “a good framework for negotiating identity” (Vetter, 2011, p. 215).

As individuals move across space and become involved in different communities of practice, different identifications “come to the fore, including identities based on activities rather than categories” (Bucholtz & Hall, 2004, p. 378). The active and interactional nature of identity formation, according to Wenger (1998), relates to a twofold process, consisting of identification and negotiability.

“Identification” (as someone or with something/someone as modes of belonging) is defined with respect to communities and forms of memberships and involves “an investment of the self in relations of association and differentiation” (Wenger, 1998, p. 188). This is in line with social identity theory (Tajfel & Turner, 1979), viewing someone’s social identity as shaped by social categorisation (i.e. perception of themselves and others in terms of social categories); social comparison (i.e. the relative values or social standing of a particular group and its members); and social identification, in relation to different individuals and groups. According to Noels, Yashima and Zhang (2011), similarity and affiliation can be established through convergence on linguistic, paralinguistic and nonverbal features of behaviour, while differences can be demonstrated through divergence in communication styles that accentuate differences between the speaker and the interlocutors.

“Negotiability” refers to the ability, facility and legitimacy to shape and control the meanings that matter within particular social configurations (Wenger, 1999, p. 197). Wenger (1999) argues further that the field of negotiability affects the members of the community through the ways that they “perceive the scope of their influence and the purview of their contributions” (p. 248). This enables individuals to formulate their goals and the issues that they want to negotiate, and to examine and re-examine available resources and information to influence the matters that are important to them. As Wenger (1999) noted, “[o]nce something has become negotiable, it expands our identities because it enters the realm of what we can do something about” (p. 248).

In a context of immigration, as pointed out by De Fina et al. (2006), the establishment of common ground or differences of categories socially established to describe human experience is vital for claiming and negotiating people’s emergent identities. Therefore, the concepts of group membership and social categorisation are essential components of identity negotiation for immigrants in their new country of residence (Bucholtz & Hall, 2004; De Fina & Georgakopoulou, 2012). However, only a “part of the individuals’ self-concept...derives from their knowledge of their membership of a social group (or groups) together with the value and emotional significance attached to that membership” (Tajfel,

1982, p. 2). The remaining part of identities is based on understanding how individuals perceive themselves in relation to the surrounding social and physical world (Van De Mierop, 2015, p. 408). This is in line with Noels, Yashima and Zhang's (2011) claim that social identity originates from knowing in which social category one belongs and assuming the characteristics of that social group. Identity becomes salient through comparisons with other groups, and this process of social comparison is influenced by a desire to see one's own group, and thus oneself, in a positive light (Noels, Yashima & Zhang, 2011). Social identity is directly linked to language when language serves as a marker of group distinctiveness.

Individuals' agency is essential in seeking membership in a new group, if they see it to their advantage (Tajfel, 1981), and immigrants, specifically, may be developing "multiple senses of community membership" (De Fina, 2003, p. 4). Currently, the discursive construction of collective and individual identities takes place in the environment where the boundaries between individual and collective identities can be blurred (Van De Mierop, 2015, p. 424). However, an issue of ability/inability to negotiate belonging to and identification with a particular social configuration, real or imaginary, remains a crucial component of identity construction (De Fina & Georgakopoulou, 2012). In the case of skilled immigrants this desired social configuration is their professional environment, fitting with and belonging to which they have to negotiate.

Noels, Yashima and Zhang (2011) discuss identification of immigrants in relation to what Lamb (2004) calls a "global community", and talk about the need of adopting an "international posture" (Yashima, 2002). They suggest that looking for "the contact zone of living and committing to multiple cultures" (Noels et al., 2011, p. 60) rather than distinguishing cultures and individuals, who represent different cultures, is more productive in terms of cultural adaptation. It has become increasingly important to understand how immigrants "envisage themselves as speakers of other languages, invest in this vision, and internalise that vision into their sense of self, sometimes to the point of identifying with a new language community" (Noels et al., 2011, p. 53).

3. 5 Conclusion

The theoretical approach of the present study is based on socio-cultural and social interactional theories, which provide useful concepts for the analysis of identity emergence through language and narrative genre. Within these theories identity is seen as socially and culturally constructed in interactive relationships through language as the main resource available for the production and representation of selfhood. Narrative inquiry is considered as the most appropriate method allowing exploration of linguistic practices and resources in order to establish how individuals construct, represent and negotiate their identities in various contexts.

This theoretical framework includes concepts and constructs that can provide insights into the processes of immigrants' identity construction and presentation in new social and cultural settings and within new linguistic and social practices. In accordance with the theoretical approach of the present study, it is argued that linguistic practices are shaped by and based on prior discourses and "voices". The previous communicative experiences of a person can be invoked in current interactions, triggering chronotopic blending of time and space, and connecting aspects of local and global, social, cultural, and historical contexts. Speakers draw upon all available language practices and mixes of sociocultural discourses which best mediate the process of negotiation of their sense of self and their goals in discursive action. However, in the context of transnational resettlement the availability of social resources necessary for negotiation of a sense of self and positioning yourself in the desired environment become questionable.

Skilled immigrants' resources, which form their "symbolic capital", can be undervalued by structures of power and dominant ideologies in the new country of residence, positioning individuals in the way they did not choose, restraining negotiation of certain aspects of their identities, and limiting their access to and participation in professional and social practices. To communicate effectively and be able to (re)negotiate their identities, skilled immigrants have to create genre structures and interpret multiple social and cultural contexts in their new settings. The means of positioning and performance allow speakers to challenge relations of power and assert and negotiate their desired and imagined identities. By making specific "investments" in practices and social networking

individuals attempt to negotiate their membership to particular communities of practice, which function as reference points for self-identification and identity negotiation.

The concepts and constructs discussed above, such as chronotope, positioning and performance, investment, social networking, linguistically realised in narratives with the means of time-space references, “voices of others” and indexicals appear to be particularly relevant to the present study, focussed on the context of immigration. These concepts are used as the emerged tools for data analysis, and are examined further in “Methodology” chapter.

CHAPTER 4: METHODOLOGY

Introduction

This chapter provides justification for qualitative, narrative inquiry in the investigation of identity emergence. It presents details of the research design, methods of data collection and analysis, participant information and ethical considerations. Limitations of the study are also outlined.

4. 1 Research questions

The major research question asked in the present study was as follows:

What processes of self-definition and redefinition of identity do adult skilled immigrants experience in the period of re-settlement?

In order to answer the main research question, the following sub-questions were addressed:

1. How do skilled immigrants draw on social and personal linguistic resources in the construction and presentation of their identities?
2. What factors, emerging from the participants' narratives, shape both the process of construction and negotiation of their identities, and the overall process of their accommodation in the new country?
3. What strategies do skilled migrants employ to adapt to new professional, social, and cultural settings?

Next section presents the rationale for the research design and approach to data collection which is most suitable for answering the research questions.

4. 2 Qualitative narrative design of the study

Qualitative research is a “situated activity that locates the observer in the world” as it is constituent of “a set of interpretive, material practices that make the world visible” (Denzin & Lincoln, 2011, p. 3). Examination of these practices, consisting of a series of representations (in this study gathered from interviews, conversations, recordings) allows qualitative researchers to study and interpret different phenomena in natural settings and in terms of the meanings people bring to them. In order to answer research questions and secure an in-depth understanding of the phenomenon in focus, the qualitative researcher “uses the aesthetic and material tools of his or her craft, deploying whatever strategies, methods, or empirical materials are at hand” (Becker, 1998, p. 2).

Denzin and Lincoln (2011) point out that qualitative research emphasises the close relationship between the researcher and the issue studied, and “the situational constraints that shape inquiry” (p. 8). In this sense, the qualitative researcher may be considered a culturally situated subject, loaded with particular sets of ideas and “frameworks”, which determine sets of questions to be asked and impact on the analysis of collected data in specific ways. On the other hand, the individuals who are the subjects of a study, are also culturally situated and possess sets of particular ideas and thoughts, which the researcher has to “blend” with his/her own ideas and observations, to create a competent, “impartial”, and accurate report of the meanings given by the interlocutors.

At the same time, Denzin and Lincoln (2011) argue that “[t]here are no objective observations, only observations, socially situated in the worlds of – and between – the observer and the observed” (p. 12), thus pointing to the socially constructed nature of reality and relationships between the researcher and the research subjects, and to the subjectivity of data in the relation to the reporting and interpreting of human life experiences (discussed in more detail in Section 4.6). As Denzin and Lincoln (2011) put it, “there is no clear window into the inner life of an individual” (p. 12), as people rarely fully explain their actions or intentions, and their explanations are filtered through the lenses of language, gender, social class, race, and ethnicity. This can be more evident in the case of cross-cultural studies, when the flow and logic of the interviews can also be infiltrated by “the imposition of foreign ways of communication” (Flores Farfan & Holzscheiter, 2011, p. 149).

The present research, which takes an interactionally oriented approach to the study of participants' identities, acknowledges the co-/constructed nature of the interviews – and, thus, of the participants' self-presentations, co-constructed in the interactions with the researcher, and imaginary interlocutors, not present in the immediate context. The co-/constructed nature of the relationships between the researcher and interlocutors is evident in interviews' topic shifts, initiated by interviewees and reflecting their interest in, and importance, of particular themes and discussions (examined further in Section 4.4.1). During the interviews, it was important for the researcher to position herself as an interviewer and an analyst who did not intervene in the process of participants' self-presentation but aimed to reflexively “take up the knots of place and biography to deconstruct the dualities of power and antipower, hegemony and resistance, and insider and outsider” (Macbeth, 2001, p. 38). From this point of view, the researcher's reflexivity became a “self-referential analytic exercise” (Macbeth, 2001, p. 37) in recognizing her position, attitudes and perceptions regarding the phenomenon being studied. This reflexive approach allowed the researcher to avoid her autobiographical “attachments”, in order to provide more impartial account of the interviews and more objectively answer the research questions.

As the present study focuses on the examination of the processes of emergence and transformation of identities among skilled immigrants from various cultural and linguistic backgrounds in Australia, it was necessary to investigate the perceptions of participants towards their experience of immigration conveyed in English as a second or additional language. The limitations of data as the reported experiences and perceptions of participants, and therefore the risk to the “integrity” of the data, where experiences may be reported differently in other contexts and to different interlocutors, has been acknowledged and recognised in the present research.

To understand the ways in which the participants were enabled or constrained to maintain and negotiate emergent and desired identities, it was also important to examine the process of participants' positioning in relation to the host community, and their perceptions of being socially, culturally, and professionally positioned. From these perspectives, it is argued that narrative inquiry (a subtype of qualitative inquiry) (De Fina, 2003; Creswell, 2007) allowed for the examination of life experiences of individuals, as

well as history and society “through the shaping or ordering of experience, a way of understanding one’s own or others’ actions, ... of connecting and seeing the consequences of actions and events over time” (Chase, 2011, p. 412). At the same time, as narrative accounts were constructed during interview interactions, and, thus, might be presented differently in different contexts to different interlocutors (i.e. as dramatised, “compressed”, or expanded experiences), such possibilities have also been considered during the data collection and analysis.

It is evident from the literature review that narratives are considered a central means by which people construct identities and “give their lives meaning across time” (Pavlenko, 2004, p. 34). As De Fina and Georgakopoulou (2008b) put it, “by bringing the coordinates of time, space and personhood into the unitary frame, narrative can afford a point of entry into the sources behind these representations (such as author, teller and narrator)”, thus making them “empirically visible for analytical scrutiny in the form of identity analysis” (p. 380). The participants’ oral and written narratives, provided in a series of interviews, have supplied valuable data for in-depth analysis related to emergent identities of skilled immigrants.

The speaker’s position in narrative is equally retrospective, current and prospective. Through discourse, speakers articulate their journeys, and construct versions of themselves in past, current, and projected future time. From this perspective, narratives of immigration specifically have a crucial role in the discursive construction of meaning through which “the sense of a life is continually made and re-made” (Baynham, 2006, p. 376). Therefore, the dynamic process of construction, re-construction and negotiation of immigrants’ identities is highly noticeable in narratives of their life experiences in general, and of immigration in particular.

The selection criteria for the participants of the study, their common features and dissimilarities are presented and discussed below.

4. 3 Participants

The participants of the study were five highly skilled immigrants, two males and three females, aged 32-45, from various non-English speaking backgrounds. The initial

criterion for the selection of participants was their relatively recent arrival to Australia under a “General Skilled Migrant” category of visa (GSM - Independent). Additionally, at the time of their arrival (2011-2012) they were required to be under the age of 45, possess a competent level of English and skills assessed in their nominated occupation from the Skilled Occupations List (DIAC, 2010-2011, p. 39). The participants were approached through the Skillmax-Jobseekers Course funded by the New South Wales and Victorian State Governments.

All participants hold Masters Degrees in various fields, and have a high level of English language proficiency (IELTS scores of 7 and higher for each tested language component). All have substantial work experience in the countries of their origin, and, in some cases, international work experience. All the participants have qualifications recognised in Australia and some of the participants are registered with professional or industry institutions. At the time of taking the first interview all except one participant were unemployed, despite continuous attempts to find work in their fields of expertise. Over the time of the interviews, four participants were offered full-time positions and a fifth one was completing a PhD.

The participants’ information is summarised in TABLE 1 below, with further presentation of each participant in more detail. Pseudonyms are used. Age shown as is at the time of first interview.

Table 1.

Pseudonym	Gender	Country of Origin	Native Language	Age	Profession
Anouk	f	Netherlands (born in South Korea)	Dutch	32	Linguist/Teacher of Dutch language
Amir	m	Iran	Persian	32	Engineer (Civil Engineering)
Gabriela	f	Brazil	Portuguese	32	Journalist, Marketing Specialist
Flavio	m	Italy	Italian	45	Engineer (Building Construction)/ Project Manager
Almafuerta	f	Argentina	Spanish	40	Journalist

The following paragraphs provide more detailed introduction of the participants of the study and provide the numerical account for the volume of interview data collected for each of the participants.

ANOUK

(Word count for the transcripts of the three consequent interviews: 5520 + 4250 + 5670 = 15440)

Anouk is 32 years old. She was born in South Korea, adopted by American mother and Dutch father, grew up and was educated in the Netherlands. Her “home” language was Dutch, as her American mother wanted to learn Dutch language and didn’t speak English at home. However, Anouk was exposed to English during her conversations with her American grandparents. She also studied English at school. Anouk completed her Master’s Degree and was qualified as a Linguist/Teacher of Dutch language. She then worked in Holland as a teacher of Dutch as a second language. Then worked as a researcher for an international company. Her partner is an Australian, native English speaker. They met in Holland, where he worked in his company’s branch. When he was transferred back to Australia, Anouk moved to Australia with him. In a month after arrival

she found work similar to the job she had in Holland - a Research Consultant in an international company.

AMIR

(Interviews word count: 5131 + 6877 + 6952 = 18960)

Amir is 32 years old. He was born and educated in Iran, and his native language is Persian. He graduated from the best university in Tehran as an Engineer (Civil Engineering). He worked for 3 years as an engineer in his home country, and as a senior engineer/supervisor in India for 4 years, returning to Iran after his contract was finished. In his search for “liberty” and “freedom”, he migrated with his wife to Australia 1 year ago and was trying to find job in his field. Amir received accreditation with professional engineering institutions in Australia, but was struggling to get employment in the engineering sector. He studied English language at school, used English as a language of professional communication when he worked in India, but in Australia his exposure to English was limited, as his contacts were mostly with the representatives of his ethnic community, where it was “stupid” to speak English. To practice English language skills and support his family, Amir worked at a pub, but soon realised that it was inefficient, as he needed to practice English in his professional environment, rather than just common speaking skills. In order to improve his language skills and to have an income during a period of unemployment and search for a job, Amir decided to get a PhD Degree in the field of engineering at an Australian university, and received a scholarship. He left university as soon as he found a job in the construction sector, after just one semester of studying.

GABRIELA

(Interviews word count: 6678 + 6376 + 5622 = 18676)

Gabriela is 32 years old, born in a small town in Brazil. She holds a Bachelor Degree in Journalism and a Master’s Degree in Communication from a Brazilian university. Her brother is a Professor at the university in Puerto-Rico, and her sister is a doctor in Brazil. Her native language is Portuguese, and she worked as a journalist for a large newspaper in Brasilia. She initially arrived in Australia to study English language, advanced knowledge of which could promote her professional standing in her home country.

During her study, Gabriela worked part-time as a waitress and a party organiser to practice her language skills. After a year of studying she decided to stay in Australia longer, applied for and was granted a skilled migrant visa. She tried to find work as a journalist, but soon realised that she was unable (and didn't want) to work in Australia in her field. She then reconsidered her professional plans for the future and decided to shift to the field of marketing. She received an Advanced Diploma in Marketing and Certificate IV in Vocational Education and Training. She currently works full-time as a tutor (Marketing) at the International College and is also invited to organise various catering events for one of the Australian universities.

FLAVIO

(Interview word count: 5698)

Flavio is a 45 year old engineer/project manager from Rome, with 10 years of engineering work experience in Italy, and an additional 10 years as a Project Manager in the United Arab Emirates (UAE). He arrived in Australia when there was a decline in the market of building construction in the UAE to seek employment in that sector. Being married to an English-speaking person and speaking English at home, Flavio also reported that English was the language of communication at work in the UAE. Flavio expected to settle down in Australia professionally very quickly. However, despite qualifications, extensive work experience and English language skills at the required level, he faced unanticipated challenges in obtaining employment in his first year. He faced financial hardship during this period, as skilled immigrants are not entitled to government financial support until after two years of residency. To become more competitive in the Australian labour market, Flavio obtained accreditation of his qualifications with local engineering professional bodies and institutions. Has secured employment in the field of his expertise one-and-a-half years after his arrival in Australia, and moved from Sydney to Melbourne soon after the first interview with the researcher.

ALMAFUERTA

(Interviews word counts: 6570+5626+6060 = 18256)

Almafuerta is 40 years old, and was born and educated in Buenos-Aires, Argentina, where she studied Arts and completed her Master's Degree in Journalism. She worked in Argentina as a journalist. She studied English and French languages at high school and later advanced her knowledge of English during her English-language course in the USA. In her early thirties, she moved to New Zealand, with an initial plan was to undertake a PhD. However, due to financial instability in her home country, she was unable to pay for her study and instead she took several unskilled jobs. She lived in New Zealand for 2 years, then returned to Argentina to take care of her sick mother. She worked as a lecturer at the local university, as a marketing specialist for a bank and a foreign trade company. She described herself and her family as belonging to the middle class in Argentina. After several years and her mother's death, Almafuerta immigrated to Australia, married her New Zealander friend, whom she had met earlier in New Zealand, received a scholarship and studied for her PhD at an Australian University. During her study, she had several opportunities to work in an academic environment in Australia and maintain relationships with the representatives of the academic world.

4. 4 Research design and methods of data collection

The present study employs a multiple case study design, which allows for examination and interpretation of the processes of identity construction and negotiation in individual participants. According to Hansen and Liu (1997), social identity, being dynamic phenomena, should be studied with dynamic methodologies, such as case studies and interviews. Narratives for the analysis in the present study were generated in a series of three semi-structured interviews with each participant and, in some cases, were supported by the narratives elicited from written e-mail reports of day-to-day interactional events. De Fina (2009) stresses that "the fact that narratives are elicited does not... mean that the stories produced in interview will be artificial and will be told without any real social objective, but simply that the interactional rules and social relationships involved are different from those of ordinary conversation and other environments" (p. 237). Therefore, narratives constructed in interviews, and identity claims made in these narratives, are considered a reliable source of data in identity analysis.

De Fina and Georgakopoulou (2008b) argue that it is the “variability in narrative” (p. 385), an exploration of different narrative formats and genres that constitutes the focus of narrative analysis in a social interactional paradigm. Therefore, the analysis of different types of narrative data collected during the present study - episodic life-story narratives, or long stories (Riessman, 1991), and small stories (both oral and written) - provided the best opportunity to answer the research questions regarding the process of skilled adult migrants identity construction.

Data were collected over a period of one year. Interviews were conducted in relaxing and comfortable environments at different sites, chosen in agreement with the participants of the study: in street cafes, art galleries’ cafes, in individual library rooms at the universities.

4.4.1 Semi-structured interviews and their narrative genres

Semi-structured interviews consist of a series of questions designed to elicit specific answers from respondents, and are often used to obtain information that later can be compared and contrasted (Fraenkel & Wallen, 2006, p. 455). In semi-structured interviews, respondents are asked the same basic questions and ‘cover’ particular topics, thus increasing comparability and comprehensiveness of responses. However, in this study, interview flow sometimes shifted from semi-structured to more informal, resembling casual conversations, in pursuing the interests of both the researcher and interviewees. In such cases, the primary intent of interview moves was to discover the interlocutors’ views on a particular topic or occasion.

The interviews were conducted face-to-face, lasted approximately one hour each and were scheduled as follows: one at the beginning of the study; the second after a 5-6 month interval; and the third one at the end of the study. In the interviews, the participants were prompted to provide narratives regarding their life experience, including immigration and the period of their adaptation. During the interviews, both long narratives and short stories were generated. Each subsequent interview incorporated transcript data from the previous interviews to create continuity and a dialogic effect”, as interviewees had an opportunity to “enlarge on, clarify and sometimes cast doubt” on earlier articulations (Mann, 2011, p. 15).

The participants were asked the questions that were of analytical importance to the study: their perceptions of being immigrants, their ability/inability to negotiate their identities (e.g. as a professional, as a family member, etc.) in the English language, the importance of professional employment, and their changing views on themselves and their place in the world (Appendix 2). These were based on questions adopted from De Fina's (2003) interview questions, and related to previous experiences, current situations, and the participants' projection of their future. However, even though data collection in conversational, socio-linguistic interviews is directly related to the research questions (Milroy & Gordon, 2003), they were not "predetermined" and "static" but were "formulated and reformulated" during the course of the study (Wolfram, 2011, p. 302), where the flow of interviews followed the logic and demands of interactions.

It emerged that, as interviews progressed, people's capacity to create an objective self-representation often changed intersubjectively, with emotional subjective states and sensitivities triggered by discussion of specific focuses of the research.

De Fina (2009) points out that narrative accounts related to past experiences can be defined as "recapitulations of past events constructed as responses to an explicit or implied "why" or "how" evaluative question by an interlocutor" (p. 240). These accounts are highly explanatory and dialogic, as they are given in a condition of presupposed evaluation by an interlocutor. Therefore, from this perspective, it is not only the original intention of the interviewer that is important but the way the narrator shapes the narrative and perceives the interlocutor's question (De Fina, 2009). The structure of such accounts varies as it is the emergent result of the specific questions asked, and the relationships established between interlocutors (De Fina, 2009, p. 253). Therefore, it was important to examine the sequences of questions-responses, topic shifts and their initiations, alterations between monologic speech and dialogue, and how topic shifts position and reposition the interlocutors.

A majority of narratives in interviews (including narratives of personal experiences and life stories) are told in response to open ended questions, which, according to De Fina (2009), do not set arbitrary limits or specifications on the type of narrative that is

constructed (p. 240). As a result of the interviewer's questions and/or respondent's chosen narrative directions, narratives may begin as accounts and then develop into tellings of chronologically and spatially ordered events (that are, according to De Fina [2009], chronicles), or take other forms according to the purpose of the telling and the availability of different narrator's resources drawn upon in constructing the narratives.

Since narrative accounts are given as responses to specific questions, they are recipient oriented and designed to respond to the questions. De Fina (2009) points out that " ... in interview settings, the form and content of narrative accounts is not presupposed by interactants, but ... interviewees try to accommodate to different types of interviewer's expectations" (p. 246). In this sense, an exploration of various narrative formats and structures (genres) emergent in the interviews are significant factors for understanding and exploring the interviewees' social and linguistic resources in the construction of the narratives, as well as identity claims made in these narratives.

The interactional dynamics of narratives and their emergent types are context-sensitive and depend on the kinds of relationships that interviewers and interviewees establish (De Fina, 2009, p. 253). The method of face-to-face semi-structured interview has provided the opportunity to work out crucial aspects of identity construction through a dialogic relationship between the interviewer and the participants. As the qualitative narrative interview is considered a collaborative and co-constructed event (De Fina & Georgakopoulou, 2012; Mann, 2011), the interviewer's role in this study was to initiate and prompt the interviewees' self-reports, as well as to have respondents develop particular parts of their stories and provide additional details through asking for explanations, clarifications, or prompting for an evaluative statement of characters and events.

It emerged that in some cases the role of the researcher was more evident in the process of the construction and presentation of participants' identities, than in others. While the researcher's questions and introduced categories were acknowledged by the participants of the study, each of them engaged in different degrees of dialogic co-construction of their self-presentations, depending on the questions of particular interest to them and their discursive aims and goals.

To provide an opportunity for the participants' narrative expression, the researcher provided questions to prompt narrative accounts across various turns of the dialogue, while also encouraging narrative turns initiated by the interviewees. Such turns usually led to extended narrative accounts, during which the role of the researcher shifted from a position of a questioner to "a recipient of a narrative performance" (Slembrouck, 2015, p. 241). In order to unfold and support the flow of interviews, the researcher drew upon her position as an immigrant "insider", as well as an "attentive, sympathetic listener" (Georgakopoulou, 2010, p. 131). As pointed out by De Fina (2009), "[m]ore richly evaluated accounts are often produced when interviewees are more relaxed and ready to share their experiences" (p. 246).

4.4.2 E-mails between the participants and the researcher

In addition to the interviews, the second source of data included e-mails from the participants to the researcher (containing reports of recent day-to-day interactions, perceived by the participants as significant, and reported as often as they wished), and e-mail exchanges between the participants and the researcher, based on these reports. The participants were asked to report everyday interactions in the format "who said what and how", in what context, with observations of significance. Georgakopoulou (2010) points out that interaction is at a core of such reports "of event-ness" (p. 126). This method provided additional short stories, including information regarding the language that the study participants used in specific situations, and captured some of their interactions in contexts beyond the interviews. Hoffmann (2010) argues that such extensions of texts (like new media storytelling on-line) are of equal importance to oral narratives.

Narrative data were analysed using the social interactional approach, positioning analysis, and thematic analysis, which are discussed below. The following section also describes different stages of data analysis in the present study.

4. 5 Data analysis

4.5.1 Introduction

It is argued that the content of narratives as stories (what they were about), their form and their textual structure, and the storytelling behaviour (how they were told) are “all sensitive indices” of people’s personal, social, and cultural identities (Shiffrin, 1996, p. 170). In respect to this positioning analysis allows for examination of the telling roles and rights in the narratives, while focusing on the situated nature of identification processes informing narrative identity construction (Bamberg & Georgakopoulou, 2008; Lave & Wenger, 1991).

Consequently, in order to examine identities which emerged in participants’ discourses, data analysis in the present study focused on exploration of the content, narrative structuring, and the storytelling behaviour, while examining different roles and positions the interviewees were taking and performing in their narratives. These categories of analysis are further discussed below, starting with the discussion of the social interactional approach to narrative analysis as an overarching form of analysis in the present study, which is inclusive of positioning and thematic analyses.

4.5.2 Narrative analysis: Social interactional approach

The present study draws on the practice-based “social interactional” approach to narrative analysis introduced by De Fina and Georgakopoulou (2008b; 2015). This approach focuses on local interactions as starting points for analysis and proceeds to look for explanation of how local tellings shape and, in turn, are shaped by ideologies and social relations, while examining links between different levels of context and scales of time-space (De Fina & Georgakopoulou, 2015).

The issue of the interactional and situated character of identity construction in discourse draws attention to social constructionism as an approach to identity claims in narratives, emergent in interviews. This level of data analysis involves examination of narratives and identity claims made in these narratives, as part of interviews, in immediate relation to and in a contact with the researcher. However, it is not just the local setting and instant interaction that directs and shapes narratives and identity claims made during the interaction, but an array of past and imagined future contexts, purposively activated and initiated by the interlocutors according to the demands of the communicative flow of the particular interview. This level of narrative analysis comprises an exploration of narrative

identity claims in interviews as constructed in relation to these different contexts and different interactions, either experienced in the past or projected in the present and future.

As Duranti and Goodwin (1992) observe, “context is anything that can provide the frame of interpretation of a focal event ... and larger extra-situational conditions” (p. 3). De Fina and Georgakopoulou (2015) point out that narratives are shaped by contexts, at the same time creating new contexts by “mobilizing and articulating fresh understandings of the world, by altering power relations between people, by constituting new practices” (p. 3). Therefore, context, or rather “travelling” between and within different contexts, is considered one of the key elements of narrative analysis in the social interactional approach, allowing for examination of representations of self as relational, rather than just referential, discursive activity.

Narratives are seen as texts that “get transposed in time and space, (re)produce and modify current discourses, establishing the historicity of narratives and their interconnections with practices, other narratives and other genres” (De Fina & Georgakopoulou, 2008b, p. 384). As such, narrative accounts are an “emergent genre, a sense making process, realized in different narrative formats, punctuated by negotiations between teller and audience” (De Fina, 2009, p. 246). Genres in the present study are considered orienting frameworks, interpreting procedures or schemes on which people improvise in practice (Hanks, 1987), using available social and personal resources in constructing and structuring narratives in interviews.

The narrative data from the present study were analysed in relation to: narrative sequencing, shaping and structuring (i.e. genre or “big” and “small” stories); self-representations of participants, their identities presented and performed (in the process of telling narratives) in different places; and positioning as both the relationship between narrative and discourse participants, and also with respect to social terms and circulating discourses. While narrative analysis is a central form of data analysis in the present study, with positioning analysis as a significant addition to narrative analysis, the first stage of data analysis comprised thematic analysis of interview texts, and is discussed in the following section.

4.5.3 Thematic analysis

Thematic analysis is defined by Braun and Clarke (2006) as “[a] method for identifying, analysing and reporting patterns within data” (p. 79), allowing for an examination and understanding of experiences, perceptions, practices, and causal factors underlying phenomena in focus (Braun & Clarke, 2013). Thematic analysis of text consists of “coding” its content – breaking it into manageable categories or levels of analysis (such as words, phrases, themes), and deciding the number of concepts to be coded (Ktari, 2010). However, as noted by Fugard and Potts (2015), thematic analysis goes beyond word or phrase counting, and, according to Guest, MacQueen and Namey (2012) involves an identification and description of “both implicit and explicit ideas” (p. 10).

The next step of coding includes a decision about either frequency or existence of concepts to be coded. Ktari (2010) points out that frequency may be indicative of the importance of a concept and is used as a method of thematic text analysis (p. 3). Then the researcher makes a decision of levels of generalisation of the concepts, which means either distinguishing between themes or joining similar themes, as well as incorporating less general themes into more general. This decision involves developing rules for translation, which provide consistency and coherence in coding throughout the text (Ktari, 2010).

The present study has adopted Boyatzis’s (1998) data-driven “good” code (p. 53). This includes identifying themes in the interviews, naming them, defining the characteristics and issues constituting the themes, finding indicators that “flag” the themes, and describing qualifications and exclusions to the identification of each theme. An application of thematic analysis to the data from the present study is examined in the section 4.5.5 “Steps of data analysis”, while next follows a description of positioning analysis, which constitutes part of narrative analysis.

4.5.4 Positioning analysis

Narratives in the present study are investigated through the lens of positioning (Bamberg, 2006; Bamberg & Georgakopoulou, 2008). Bamberg (1997), and Bamberg and Georgakopoulou (2008) suggest that positioning analysis focuses on the situated nature

of identification processes of identity. Baynham (2006) points out that the notion of “speaking position” (with respect to interlocutors, social roles, categories, [p.347]) best captures the existence of links between the expression of identities in discourse and the ratification of rights and social roles in a wider sense.

According to Bamberg’s (1997) three-level positioning analysis, the first level of positioning displays how characters are positioned in relation to one another within the story world, while level two demonstrates how narrators position themselves vis-à-vis their interlocutors in the story-telling world. Level three explores “how the speaker/narrator positions a sense of self/identity with regards to dominant discourses or master narratives” (Bamberg, 1997, p. 385), thus constructing herself/himself as a particular kind of person, while negotiating less locally evident self-representations (De Fina, 2013, p. 4).

In this study, due to variability of data not all levels of positioning analysis are applicable to all cases investigated, and the researcher uses the positioning analysis only when data in the interviews show sufficient examples and evidence of positioning. Analytical attention is also paid to an exploration of the ways narrative accounts in some cases were constructed and shaped in co-operation with the immediate interlocutor.

The types of data analysis discussed above are further examined below in relation to the stages of the data analysis employed in the present study.

4.5.5 Steps of data analysis

For the purposes of data analysis the transcription of all audio recordings has been conducted. As it has been acknowledged in the literature, transcription of the taped events entails consecutive and multiple-layered choices by selecting specific actions and aspects of the recorded events as relevant in the analysis (Bucholtz, 2007; Duranti, 2006; Hall, 2011). Hall (2011) pointed out, “...no transcript can fully recapture the totality of experience. What matters is that ... we must choose a set of conventions that makes salient those particular aspects of the event that we are interested in” (p. 143).

As the focus of the present research was on identities which were presented and performed in participants' narrative accounts, not only the verbal activities and cues were encoded in transcriptions, but non-verbal and paralinguistic actions also became a subject of examination. Such non-verbal and paralinguistic storytelling behaviour, which included laughter, pauses, and self-interruptions in the course of narrative telling, applauding, and lowering voice, were reported in the transcripts as important identity markers, supporting the claim that "[i]dentity ... is literally in the doing, rather than in the thinking, and it is this doing that is amenable to observation for discourse analysis" (De Fina, 2015, pp. 352-353).

After the audio records of all the interviews were transcribed, the first step of data analysis comprised the thematic analysis of interviews (Boyatzis, 1998; Braun & Clarke, 2006). After coding the interviews to identify themes, the themes in each interview were compared with the themes in subsequent interviews from the same participant, to find recurring themes and examine their continuity and development.

The next level of analysis included a close observation of discourse patterns in the interviews and consideration of discourse sequentiality (questions – answers, recurrence of themes), as narratives are sequentially managed, being consequential for social actions (De Fina & Georgakopoulou, 2008b). Thus, interviews with the participants of the study and their e-mail stories were analysed as sequences (i.e. each interview and report and its narratives informed the next interviews in various ways, as narratives are interconnected and intertextually tied with other practices and texts). The analytic focus also considered how each speaker's constructions of a narrative became resources for future talk, resulting in continuity of identity work across particular occasions of talk (Taylor, 2007, p. 114).

The next step of data analysis included an examination of narratives' features and storytelling behavior of the narrators, with a close attention to topic shifts, which marked the movements in genres, shifting from the "small" to "big" stories. From this perspective, an examination of emergent genres in immigrants' narratives allowed for investigation of available linguistic resources and their use in constructed interactions, and provided insights into participants' identity work in their narratives.

An analytical focus was also on the examination of how narrative genres (such as “big” and “small” stories, accounts, chronicles, and habitual narratives) correlated with other aspects of interviews, as particular types of narratives might express particular attitudes and indicate identity manifestations of the interviewees in relation to specific questions or topics introduced by the interviewer. De Fina (2009) points out that habitual narratives may be used by tellers to portray experiences that for some reason they do not want to present as personal. In this respect, attention was drawn to examination of topic shifts, which can be characterised by the switch in the forms of the stories (like an alteration between dialogue and narration) in negotiation of particular topics.

The issue of self-presentation and its strategies became an important aspect of the present narrative analysis, as, according to De Fina and Georgakopoulou (2012), an exploration of self-presentation “has been the first point of entry into how tellers do self” (p. 167). The self-images of interviewees were looked upon through the exploration of various strategies, both linguistic and paralinguistic, as De Fina and Georgakopoulou (2012) argue a lot of identity work is done through the use of symbolic processes (for example, irony and laughter, pronoun switching, and discourse marking). Thus, data in the interviews were examined in relation to identification of various strategies employed by the participants in order to present themselves or articulate views and ideas, with the concept of performance being one of the dominant means of creating and presenting desired identities.

The narratives in the identified themes and their discussions by the participants of the study were examined both as presented in the world of their stories and in the “telling world” of the stories in order to explore how participants of the study positioned themselves, were positioned by others, and which positions they were able/unable to negotiate. This included an interactionally oriented mode of analysis, involving examination of social relations or positioning of the interactants in narratives and in the discourse – and these processes were marked or cued by specific devices. An exploration of participants’ use of various indexicals; of words and “voices” of others (as double-voicing and ventriloquation); and of application of space and time expressions (as chronotope and timespace scales) not only allowed the identification of speakers in terms of their conversational roles but also signaled their position in time, space and in relations

to others (De Fina et al., 2006). Thus, indexicals, voice and double-voicing and timespace categories are identified as significant tools in the construction of participants' narratives and negotiation of their identities, presented and performed during the interviews.

The analytical concepts are introduced and discussed earlier in the Chapter 3 "Theoretical framework" in relation to the data analysis of the narratives in line with the above approaches to language and identity. These concepts include chronotope and spatio-temporal scales; indexicals; voice and double-voicing; investment; positioning and performance. The constructs of chronotope, scaling, voice and double-voicing function as a means of narrative structuring at the intersection of the contexts being presented and the dynamics of the context of their presentation. The concept of investment is applied as a tool of content analysis. Positioning represents the process of taking up of social roles (De Fina & Georgakopoulou, 2015), where performance devices and narrative resources allow speakers to occupy different positions both at local and global levels (De Fina et al., 2006). The concepts identified above and their roles in the process of identity formation are applied and further discussed in Chapter 5 "Findings".

4. 6 Limitations

In addition to the limitations that are characteristic of qualitative methodology in any research on language and identity (such as the researcher's identity, bias in data interpretation, or the Halo effect [Thorndike, 1920]), the present study also had features and limitations specific to this particular research.

All participants of the study were of different cultural and language backgrounds, and for all of them (including the researcher) English was not their native language. As Taylor (2001) points out, in such cases the researcher needs to ensure that he or she understands the language and references used by the interview participants. In the present study all interlocutors possessed English language skills at the level that made possible detailed and confident discussion of any topic. However, to lessen possible misunderstanding of the key points in interviews, the participants were offered drafts of the main interview questions ahead of time, and transcripts of the interviews were given to them for clarification (cf "member checking", Creswell, 2007, p. 280).

In the present study, both the researcher and the participants were skilled immigrants, who came to Australia for employment purposes and therefore possessed similar characteristics in terms of level of education, migration experiences, English as an additional language, and the goals of social and professional adaptation in the new country of residence. Regardless of the researchers' membership/non-membership in the group being studied, Rose (1985) states that "There is no neutrality. There is only greater or less awareness of one's biases" (p. 77). Being simultaneously an "insider" and an "outsider" to the participants' of the study by belonging to the same group of skilled immigrants in Australia, but not sharing their cultural and linguistic backgrounds, the researcher was fully aware of the positive and negative aspects of such membership.

The challenges of being an insider meant that the researcher's personal attitudes and beliefs potentially impacted on the relationships with the participants and data collection and analysis. There was a probability that because of similarities with the researcher the participants could have provided responses based on "assumed knowledge" (i.e. researcher's knowledge of various aspects of immigrants' life), and therefore did not provide full accounts of their individual experiences. In line with Asselin's (2003) suggestion that the insider researcher should gather data assuming that she or he knows nothing about the phenomenon under investigation, the researcher aimed for an impartial and distanced approach to the experiences of others' when conducting interviews by asking and nuancing questions as if approached for the first time. The continuous processes of "bracketing" (Dwyer & Buckle, 2009, p. 55) the researcher's personal assumptions in order to not misinterpret circumstances and experiences of other participants in the research, and detailed reflection on the research process arguably reduced the potential impact of the researcher's personal biases and perceptions during the data collection.

There was also a possibility of researcher's bias in analysing the data, where, according to Adler and Adler (1987), "objectification of the self has occurred in the analysis rather than the fieldwork" (p. 85). During the data analysis, the researcher was constantly aware of this possibility and was committed to an accurate and adequate representation of the participants' experiences. Taking a reflective stance, which is "widely recommended for crafting descriptions that might be relieved of the gendered, cultural, rational, and still

other hegemonies and centricities” (Macbeth, 2001, p. 37), the researcher aimed to create an “immunity to the influence of personal perspective” (Dwyer & Buckle, 2009, p. 59). The necessity to remain reflective encompassed all stages of the research process, and was acknowledged by the researcher taking reflective notes and analysing the level of her engagement with the interviewees, the direction of an interviews’ flow, and its topic shifts.

The benefits of the insider role of the researcher comprised of a “more rapid and more complete acceptance by their participants” (Dwyer & Buckle, 2009, p. 58), which resulted in greater depth of the data gathered. Participants were willing to share their life experiences, because there was “an assumption of understanding” and “of shared distinctiveness” (Dwyer & Buckle, 2009, p. 58), and the researcher’s belonging to the group arguably provided a level of comfort for the participants of the study.

The data analysis was conducted, and crosschecked, in close collaboration with the supervisors. In order to accurately and adequately capture and represent the participants’ experiences, the researcher maintained the position of an open investigator who was genuinely interested in specific events and particular details of each participant’s experiences. Additionally, the data gathered through the series of three interviews across with each participant were supported by data from e-mails. Three subsequent interviews conducted across a period of one year added to the depth of data, by providing a long-term perspective and verifying the findings.

4. 7 Ethical considerations

Before the study commenced, the ethical concerns regarding the involvement of human participants were acknowledged and carefully evaluated by the researcher. The researcher fully acknowledged the ethical principles of conducting the research and her obligations to protect the rights of the participants of the study. A clear and fair agreement with the potential participants explained, guaranteed and honoured the promises, responsibilities, commitments, and obligations of respect and anonymity of those involved in the study.

Before the recruitment of any participants began, ethics approval was obtained from the

University of Wollongong Human Research Ethics Committee. Informed consents were obtained from the participants regarding their involvement in the study and confidential use of the data that they provided (Appendix 1). The participants were fully informed about the purpose of the research, its length and design. Questions regarding all aspects of the research which might have influenced their participation and honest answers were answered to protect the research participants' welfare and confidentiality. The participants were given pseudonyms, and any additional information which might have led to the disclosure of their identities was agreed to be removed from the data analysis. The participants of the study were assured that the data collected from them would be held in confidence.

The first interview questions (Appendix 2) were common for all participants of the study and were offered for their examination prior to the interviews commencing (the questions asked in Interviews 2 and 3 were based on themes that emerged from the previous interactions with each participant). Acknowledging the diversity of the participants' backgrounds, the researcher avoided conversations on arguably sensitive cultural, religious, political, and economic issues unless they were first raised and offered for discussion by the participants.

The burdens of involvement in the research and the freedom to withdraw at any time without any consequences were explained. The participants of the study were also informed of their right to remove their data at any stage of the research process before the submission of the thesis. The participants were given their interview transcriptions for recollection, clarification, and verification purposes, to avoid any misconceptions that may have developed during and after the data collection.

4. 8 Conclusion

This chapter provides rationale for the research design, methods of data collection and tools for data analysis in connections to research questions. The qualitative narrative inquiry design, used to examine emergent identities of five skilled immigrants in Australia, was justified in terms of applicability to the aims and research questions of the study. This chapter has also included an individual introduction of the participants of the study, and a discussion of limitations to the study and its ethical considerations.

The methods of data collections – a series of semi-structured interviews and e-mail exchanges with the researcher – generated a range data types (e.g. “big” and “small” stories, descriptions and discussions), which benefited the quality of the study. Methods of data analysis, based on a social interactional approach to narrative inquiry (De Fina & Georgakopoulou, 2008b), positioning (Bamberg, 2006), and thematic analysis (Braun & Clarke, 2006; Boyaltzis, 1998), encompassed examination of linguistics and interactional features of the narratives, and included the analysis of content, emergent genres, and performance and positioning.

Narratives were examined as presented in the “story worlds” and “the story telling worlds”. An interactional analysis of data comprised several dimensions: first, in analysing interactions described in narratives; second, in analysis of narratives themselves as interactional models of involvement. Third, interviews were also considered an interactional process, when both the researcher and the interviewee impacted on the flow of interaction in order to negotiate particular aspects of communication.

Narratives are considered a major means of the construction of identities. In circumstances of immigration, narrative accounts become a crucial resource for creating and negotiating meaning in people’s lives in new cultural and social settings. The meaning creation and negotiation of identities in narratives is based on “activation” of various available resources and different contexts, and is built in relation to an immediate interlocutor, as well as past or imagined interactions and interlocutors. The social interactional approach to narrative analysis, combined with an examination of the roles displayed and performed by the interviewees in their story worlds and story-telling worlds

provides the means to capture and explore emergent identities of the participants of this study. A further thorough description and analysis of the participants' circumstances and experiences is presented in the following chapter.

CHAPTER 5: FINDINGS

Introduction

This chapter presents individual cases of each of the five participants. During the period of one year, the four participants of the study provided three interviews each, with approximately 6 months intervals between the interviews. However, for one participant (Flavio) only one interview was conducted as he gained employment in another state of Australia, relocated there and it was decided that he would not continue to participate in the study. In the four other cases, the data elicited during the interviews were also supported by the participants' e-mails to the researcher (described in Chapter 4 "Methodology").

The directions and categories of analysis of interviews and e-mails were initially presented in Section 4.5. Data analysis was conducted in relation to the identity claims of the participants (thematic analysis); the narrative structuring of the participants' stories and their self-presentation (use of linguistic forms and discursive features in shaping and presenting their identity claims – narrative analysis); and different interviewee roles and positions, taken and performed in their narratives (positioning in the story worlds and their storytelling behaviour).

The themes identified in the initial interview for each participant were followed up in the analysis of subsequent interviews, to examine their recurrence, continuity and development. In addition, the researcher looked for newly emerging themes. Thus, all the interviews with each participant of the study were treated as sequential texts, where the participants of the study presented and performed their sense of self in accordance with the dynamics of their perceptions of themselves and various aspects of reality. This sequential approach to the analysis of narrative accounts allowed for examination of the participants' identity claims in their dynamics and development over time (explained in detail in the "Methodology" Chapter).

The level of narrative analysis comprised of examination of the available social and personal resources and the concepts, emergent in the interviews with the participants

of the study and used by them to present and perform themselves. These resources and concepts included chronotope and spatio-temporal scales; indexicals; voice and double-voicing; various performance strategies (such as laughter, repetitions, emphasis, rhetorical questions). The narrative accounts of the participants of the study were looked upon both as presented in the world of the stories and in the telling world of the stories in order to explore how participants of the study positioned themselves, were positioned by others, and which positions they were able/unable to negotiate. The positioning analysis allows examination of participants' identity claims in relation to different contexts and various interactions.

The participants' self-presentation emerged as co-constructed in dialogic relationship with the researcher, demonstrating different levels of agency during the conversations. While the participants of the study provided their narrative accounts as responses to the researcher's questions and mostly in directions initiated by the researcher attempting to "direct their narratives toward the goals of the interviewer, as they perceive them" (De Fina & Georgakopoulou, 2012, p. 96), they also shifted topics and genres of their narrative accounts in accordance with their preferences and personal interests, and the researcher supported them in doing so. In order to negotiate the meaning of their experiences, the interlocutors exchanged questions that sometimes interrupted the flow of interviews and changed their course, thus marking the co-constructed nature of the stories and sometimes serving as a means, which assisted the process of self-identifications of the interviewees.

Following the sequential approach to the analysis of interviews' texts, the extracts in the present data analysis are presented and numbered in accordance with their chronological appearance in the participants' interviews in relation to the emerged themes. Four participants of the study (Amir, Flavio, Gabriela, and Anouk) were assigned ethnically aligned pseudonyms by the researcher, as they preferred not to choose any pseudonym for themselves when the study commenced, while Almafuerta introduced her own pseudonym.

5.1 ANOUK

Introduction

Anouk is a 32-year old Linguist/Teacher of Dutch as a Second Language. She was born in South Korea to Asian parents, but was adopted by an American mother and Dutch father at the age of two months. Anouk grew up and was educated in the Netherlands, and her native language is Dutch, with English language hardly spoken at home, as her mother wanted to learn and practice Dutch. Anouk worked in Holland as a teacher of Dutch as a L2 to adult migrants, and later as a researcher for an international company. She came to Australia one year before the first interview with the researcher, and found a job as a Research Consultant, similar to her previous occupation but lower in ranking, in the first month after arrival. Her partner of several years is a native English speaking Australian, whom she met in Holland where he worked for a number of years.

Anouk was the only professionally employed participant when the study commenced, and her discourse revolves around the issue of her professional engagement in Australia. Her adaptation to a professional environment, in terms of using a professional register of English, and discussion of social issues and relations are the major recurrent themes across all the three interviews. These themes are examined and discussed in the dynamics of their development in the presented narrative accounts.

Anouk's adjustments to her professional environment include not only the issue of "technical" application and modification of professional skills, but comprise processes of reflection on and re-construction of her professional identity. Constant comparisons of her recent "previous" self and current professional self-perception reveal the complex processes of Anouk's transition into the new professional settings and various factors, impacting on this transition.

Data reveal that Anouk's social and professional lives overlap, as her professional involvement gradually overrides any other activities and shapes her major circle of social communication. During the negotiation of various social issues and relations, Anouk positions herself and others according to her social values and beliefs brought

from Europe. Taking on multiple and sometimes confronting positions, she creates boundaries and associations with different groups of people (such as her colleagues, friends, and immigrants), showing sensitivity in discussion of questions relevant to issues of social disadvantage and vulnerability.

Linguistically, Anouk's self-presentation is strongly constructed in dialogic relationship with the researcher, as she provides narrative accounts as responses to the researcher's questions, mostly in directions initiated by the researcher. Overall, the interviews with Anouk reveal processes of self-reflection on aspects of her "biography in the making", as well as on previous stages of her life, which are elaborated in more detail in the following analysis.

5.1.1 Employment and professional identity in connection with English language skills

5.1.1.1 Working life in a new setting as a transitional experience

In response to the researcher's question about her profession, Anouk discusses her professional employment in Australia in connection with her employment in Holland. She builds an argument about the professional transition from her home country to Australia, which initially is represented as a seamless process:

R: What's your profession?

A: Uh...I think I can call myself a research consultant...yeah.

R: So what do you actually do at work?

A: I've been working for the last five-four years for a research company in Holland and now I'm in Sydney as well. What we do we conduct research for a government and we do evaluation studies or we...aaa...the government needs to have more input about new implementation of initiative. What we do we collect data by qualitative and quantitative methods, may be interviewing participants or on-line survey. And then I collect the data as well, and then I write reports, and then I give the presentations to the clients. That's what I do. (Extract 1, Int. 1).

Anouk presents her current professional duties as a list of routine responsibilities she

is proficient with and to which she is accustomed. It seems that her employment in Australia was a quick transition from her previous work in Holland:

R: How long did it take you to find job here?

A: It is amazing: only four or five weeks.

R: So quick!

A: Yeah...the economy is so much better here I think.

R: Was it the first job you applied for?

A: Yeah. [sic] And I'm very grateful to that. (Extract 2, Int. 1).

Though discussing her employment shortly after arrival as a satisfying experience for her sense of professional capacity ("it's amazing", "I'm very grateful"), Anouk further reveals that her sense of professional identity is discounted in the new environment, and the transition to the new workplace isn't as smooth as it appeared initially. This becomes evident when she moves to the discussion of a professional context in respect to her English language skills:

R: Do you feel quite confident in using language, English language I mean?

A: Ah...You know in a final way I do, but when I am at work and it's the context is different – it's much more professional, I have to read a lot of formal texts from the government, and it's quite difficult, probably. (Extract 3, Int. 1).

I think (pause) informal, an informal level [of English] is good. I can express myself the way I want to. But formally, especially writing, I really feel that I'm stuck at one level and I need to go one level higher. There are lots of words I still don't know, my vocabulary needs to be broaden up a little bit ...hum... (Extract 4, Int. 1).

Distinguishing between "formal" and "informal" English language skills, Anouk unveils difficulties with the formal English registers required at work. She attempts to explain her problems, contrasting the context of professional communications with personal communications with her partner at home:

With writing, especially with writing. It's very challenging and I'm learning a lot but I've never had to write, so my writing skills are just, you know, basic. But my boyfriend, he is Australian. So I talk to him in English, of course. But I've never had to write in a very professional context, you know, very formal.

I have to write tenders for the department and it's really tough, I think.
(Extract 5, Int. 1).

As communication in various environments requires different language and has different communicative demands, Anouk's "formal" English skills appear to be less developed than her colloquial English. This is in line with Cummins' (1979a, 1979b, 2000, 2008) differentiation between basic interpersonal communication skills (BICS) and specific academic language and related academic proficiency in areas such as writing and reading. While Anouk is reportedly satisfied with her proficiency in English language at a BICS level, there is the need to develop her academic proficiency in order to attain the equivalent professional status she had in her home country. Anouk describes her experience with professional discourse in English language as "challenging", "basic", and "tough", while pointing out that she is "learning a lot". The language difficulties she experiences provide opportunities and challenges for learning and improving her second language, and she expresses determination to use these opportunities: "Work on my English. I'm going to work really hard...Yeah." (Extract 6, Int. 1).

The process of learning and using different registers of English is mentioned and "monitored" by Anouk on many occasions across all the interviews, as well as in her e-mails to the researcher. For example, in her e-mail regarding her day-to-day interactions, Anouk reports: "Here is a summary of the 'miscommunications' I encountered over the last few weeks. It's not a lot (I guess that is a good sign?)" (E-mail 1). It emerges that she carefully observes the changes in her use of English, identifying positive shifts and developments, and thus indexing her sensitivity towards the level of knowledge of English.

Anouk's discussion of learning and using English language not only reveals details of perceived major obstacles in her way to a successful professional life in Australia, but also contributes to a gradual reshaping of her perception of professional self. Her engagement with a professional register of English emerges as a major factor impacting on her redefinition of self in new professional environment.

5.1.1.2 Current and "previous" professional self, dependent on language skills

Anouk describes the process of learning English through assistance she receives from her colleagues:

A: [sic] at work one of my line managers, she every two weeks sits down and we just only talk of my grammar.

R: Uh.

A: She is reading on my stuff and she gives me feedback, just purely on my grammar. So that's good.

R: Yes, it is.

A: And every week, you know, when I write a piece, I always ask my colleagues for feedback. (Extract 7, Int. 1).

Asking for feedback is an integral component of Anouk's work, acknowledging external inputs as mandatory factors impacting on her work. Her learning also consists of learning specific terminology and particular styles of writing from her colleagues:

A: [sic] sometimes my colleagues use words or expressions, I think I pick them.

R: Are they your friends?

A: No, they are my colleagues, I see them every day. But they help me, as well. One of my colleagues used helping me with language, too. I use her vocabulary sometimes, in my writing, so sometimes she sees a pieces from me that look like hers but they are really my own texts (laughs). (Extract 8, Int. 2).

The account above reveals the heteroglossic process of Anouk's purposeful "appropriation" of genres and styles of language (Bakhtin, 1981, p. 293), – and therefore ways of being – in order to achieve professional standards and a sense of self. Notwithstanding the acknowledged support from colleagues, Anouk maintains ownership of her texts ("they are really my own"), using laughter potentially as a boundary marker between her colleagues and herself. Being vigorously involved in discursive and social activities with her colleagues, Anouk also discloses feelings of dissociation with them, rejecting the proposition to characterise them as "friends" and maintaining a sense of distance.

Anouk indicates that she appreciates support to improve the “weak” sides of her English, marking assistance from colleagues with evaluative “that’s good” in the account above (Extract 7). However, in further accounts Anouk reveals that at the same time her professional identity is affected by the need of such support:

Yeah, I know that my English is fine but still... (long pause) but so... (pause) especially with writing. But also because I’m so used to work very, you know, independently, on my own. Uh... So this is a new experience for me and it makes me so it makes me feel so...almost a little bit embarrassed when you write a text and you know it’s wrong and you need to give it to your colleague and she has to change it. I know it’s... she is so sweet, and she says it’s fine... (Extract 9, Int. 1).

Anouk maintains an argument about her overall “good” level of English, while pointing to the difficulties with writing she experiences at work, at times in comparison with her professional performance in Holland. Referring to her previous employment, she portrays herself as an “independent” professional with “fine grammar” and vocabulary, in contrast to her current perception as an employee who is aware of making mistakes and is dependent on correction by colleagues. This contrast between her previous sense of professional identity as a confident and efficient specialist, and the present situation of feeling “embarrassed” about her writing and the loss of her “writing voice” reveals Anouk’s distress in regards not only to her knowledge of English, but to her overall professional capabilities.

Anouk’s attitude to achieve a higher level of English language skills corresponds with Cummins’ (1979a, 1979b, 1983) suggestions that level of skills attained by individuals in their first language influences the level of attainment in their other languages. Anouk’s references to the high level of her native language skills accord with her desire to achieve the same level of her second language skills. The idea of interdependency of skills across first and additional languages, particularly in the domain of the academic skills of reading and writing, conceptualises multilingualism in terms of “voice rather than language” (Creese & Blackledge, 2010, p. 106). In Anouk’s case, that is indeed part of the process of re/constructing her professional

“voice” in the new environment as she draws upon resources provided by both languages and works to apply them in her new professional context.

In the accounts presented in the next section, Anouk further discusses her present professional positioning compared to her previous status in Holland, pointing out that the dissimilarity between these settings motivates her to achieve her goals. This new level of comparison involves “upscaling” (Blommaert, 2003) of contrasts between herself and colleagues in Australia to the differences in her previous status and work in her home country. The process of continuous contrasts and comparisons of previous and current professional identities emerges as a major resource for Anouk’s identity work, and is in line with Albert’s (1977) theory of temporal comparison which states that individuals compare their current and past identities in order to maintain their sense of selves during times of change and uncertainty.

5.1.1.3 From a professional to a “novice” and back, goals for the future, and overlap of the social and professional

Anouk’s professional goals are formulated in line with her desire to progress with English, and she points to the start of professional her career in Australia at the lower level as a stimulus for her career development:

Uh (little pause) I want to make my job a success...that I can work at the same level here as back home. For my English – I think it's a great experience for me. So that's one of my goals here that...now I feel that I have to start it over again, at the lower level, so I really want to make it a success here. (Extract 10, Int. 1).

She further develops an argument about the perceived advantages of the lower professional start, such as less pressure, more time for completion of tasks and room for mistakes:

That's actually good that I started [working] as novice, at a much lower level, because I don't have a lot of expectations (laughs). I'm allowed to make mistakes. I'm allowed... more time to write texts and yeah... Sometimes it feels all things that I have to do (little pause) most of the tasks that I have similar that I had in Amsterdam but some of them I ask I had other people that I could ask how to do that... That's fine, because, you know, there is not a lot of pressure, the only one who is pressuring me – myself. (Extract 11, Int. 1).

While trying to find positive moments in her newly-perceived position as a “novice” (“allowed to make mistakes”, “[have] more time”), Anouk not only expresses a sense of “downgrading” (“I don't have a lot of expectations”), but explicitly discloses dissatisfaction with her current professional status and performance:

I've started at lowest level [in Australia], you know. Jesus – I'm 32! I'm not a student any more, I'm not just graduated, I already have work experience... And if I stayed in Holland I will be here (raises hand high), instead of here (puts her hand down). That's the only thing that frustrates me a little bit but my goal is, you know, (little pause) to make success out of it and because I think that if I can do this than I can myself be proud of myself! (Extract 12, Int. 1).

Expressing an emotional “Jesus – I'm 32!” and contrasting her current – and previous professional achievements, Anouk reveals she is losing her confidence and professional standing but she is determined to re-claim her self-esteem in her professional domain.

Six months later Anouk discloses that she experienced a succession of improvements but still also difficulties in her work duties related to her professional English language:

R: How do you feel at work? How is your writing?

A: I feel I'm learning so much. My writing definitely improved. And I think my vocabulary definitely increased, and I know much more words. I can tell that my writing really improved. But sometimes it's still ... Sometimes they (pause) the information I can say that I have to use in my work it's sometimes so abstract ... And sometimes it is the whole new vocabulary because every

topic is so specific, every project is about a very specific topic and you have to be an expert in it in like two days. And I have to learn the whole new ... ah ... vocabulary. Yeah. Sometimes it's challenging and difficult. (Extract 13, Int. 2).

As every workplace establishes its own agendas, values and desired outcomes from its employees (Gini, 1998), it emerges that Anouk is significantly affected by the standards of her workplace. Her experiences reflect a reciprocal relationship between her self-identity and workplace requirements. Anouk's narrative accounts reveal that her perceived unsatisfactory knowledge of formal English in response to the high demands in workplace impact not just on her sense of professional identity, but on her overall self-confidence:

...I know it's (little pause) it's all my head but...that's the toughest thing I think with my job because it makes me ... insecure about myself, and when you can't express yourself on paper in the way I want to (pause) especially when you know that you've been working on this piece of text for the whole day and you know what to say, and (makes a sound like roaring) it's frustrating. (Extract 14, Int. 1).

Anouk's threatened sense of identity ("... my job ... makes me insecure about myself") becomes exposed in the reflection on her attitude to her professional "imperfections". For example, despite progress with professional terminology and writing skills, in the following account Anouk draws attention to feelings of being dissatisfied with her performance:

Yeah, I still like it [job]. Yeah, I like it. But sometimes, especially when I have to write a report, it takes so much energy, and so much of my personality, so I start to doubt myself. I think: "I'm good because I know everything I write" but you have to re-write it basically to take it to another level. Sometimes it affects me in the way I feel about myself because I know that what I'm doing right now is never good enough ... (Extract 15, Int. 2).

Anouk uses a variety of linguistic means to express the pressure she experiences in regards to her professional abilities. On one hand, her self-reported direct speech ("self-talk", Vygotsky, 1978) reinforces her statement about her improvement in

English and her professional performance. This self-directed, as well as other-directed, speech is arguably intended to support her confidence as a professional. However, her narrative account, marked with evaluative expressions like “doubt about myself” and “never good enough” demonstrates the high level of Anouk’s frustration, as she considers her work as an essential part of her life:

A: And I know it’s about myself ... I don’t know ... Because ... I have to stay positive ... And I just structure my work about it ... It’s kind of my personality ... I have to come and change this. Because otherwise ... I can’t continue this work. Because I really enjoy working. And I also really enjoy my job. It’s very challenging, and it’s so interesting, and the type of projects ... I could never do that in Holland, so it’s a real, real good opportunity ... Yeah ...

R: I wonder whether you ever had this feeling of imperfection in your home country, when you worked there.

A: Uh ... A little bit. I’ve always used to be a perfectionist, you know ... Just my nature, as well, I know that (laughs). So, it’s difficult. (Extract 16, Int. 2).

In the account above, Anouk accentuates the importance of the job she is currently doing (“I could never do that in Holland, so it’s a real, real good opportunity”), and discusses issues of adjustments to her sense of identity as a necessary component of her adaptation to the working environment and life in Australia. While recognising a problem with her self-perception (“it’s about myself”) and projecting steps to resolve it (“I have to stay positive”, “I have to come and change this”), Anouk reveals details of her struggle to deal with her perceived professional underperformance:

A: I like it [job]! I mean, it’s challenging, and I like it. I know that I would get bored a lot when it’s easy so I need challenges. I need to learn ... yeah! So, that’s good for me. Then I want to become good at my job because I really like it! But sometimes, with English, it’s a little bit difficult to enjoy it ...

R: When you say “sometimes it is difficult”, how often does it happen?

A: Oh, every day!

R: Every day?

A: Every day I feel very stupid about myself, there is always an occasion that makes me feel silly or stupid and that’s just in my head (laughs). [sic] My job

right now makes me sometimes so insecure that's not making me happy because of my English, of my writing stuff and not expressing myself even though the feedback that I get from my colleagues, from my manager, positive, and they are happy with me and they think I do a job and I'm learning, and improving ... So that's just myself (in a quiet voice) ... (Extract 17, Int. 2).

Describing herself as “stupid” and “silly” “every day”, reiterating her feeling of being “insecure” and “not happy” because of her job, Anouk discloses her undesirable and uncomfortable perception of self in the professional setting. She compares her sense of self – her existing “internal” self-identity – to the developing “external social-identity” (Watson, 2008), of how she is perceived by her colleagues in these settings, pointing out that these identities oppose each other and that she should embrace her colleagues’ “external” view on her professional performance in order to work on an adverse self-perception:

R: Uh. What are your goals now? What do you want to achieve?

A: Uhhh (long pause) I think it's to become more positive about myself (laughs).

R: How to do that?

A: Not to doubt myself. I can ever I think right now ask myself to write the way made of my colleagues work searches for years I can write the way they write. And at this point – just accept that. They give me a positive feedback – so I should be happy with that, I should be proud of that. (Extract 18, Int. 2).

Anouk's ongoing accounts show shifts within her identity work, reflecting the impact of her social-identity on her self-identity. This is evidenced in her move from the discussion of her own professional difficulties only to an analysis of the overall working experience and process, in which she participates alongside her colleagues:

A: [sic] But I think it's not only my writing, it's also just ... it's just all dynamic process because sometimes I work all the time I work with someone who is the project manager, and the project manager is responsible for the end product and the way they want to see report can vary all the time and

depending also on the research outcomes and so sometimes I think you write a draft, and you change it, and you do it again, and change it again, so ... Yeah.

R: That's a normal process ...

D: Yeah, yeah. But it's also because I'm not the one who is scary of the new project. So I understand they are ... it's a constant changing process. So, yeah. (Extract 19, Int. 2).

Progressively, Anouk works on her sense of identity as she expresses a more argumentative and thoughtful approach towards her sense of self in the professional environment (Interview 2). If her previous narrative accounts (Interview 1) conveyed frustration and disappointment with the necessity of re-writing her reports and other materials, now (Interview 3) she considers constant redrafting as a "normal" process, while still pointing to her writing skills as an underdeveloped side of her professional abilities:

Yes, I always need some sort of ... I always need help, at the end. Because it has to be sometimes very formal, and I don't have the vocabulary, the right vocabulary to take it to another level. Uhm ... And I think it's also always some standards, like practice. That you always every report goes to director or to someone higher before it goes to the client. And with me, it's always editorial changes. So yeah. (Extract 20, Int. 3).

Anouk points to established procedures and practices, building an argument that the writing of her colleagues is scrutinised in the same way, as her own, in order to achieve better outcomes for the clients of the company. She positions herself as part of the team, who performs and is treated like her colleagues. Anouk's narrative accounts reveal increasing levels of professional integration and assimilation in terms of her professional performance and engagement, while showing a constant and unsettled process of professional self-identification in comparison to her previous professional identity:

"I think I'm always a little bit slow. And I always think: "If I could write it in Dutch, I would do it much faster". I'm a slow writer. Yeah." (Extract 21, Int.

3).

While Anouk refers to her sense of self with respect to her writing abilities, as a diminished professional self, she considers her promotion at work as a credit to her professional performance in Australia, which reflects increasing professional value in this setting:

R: Are you proud of yourself?

A: Yeah, it's all recognition that you get. I'm still anxious sometimes about my English, especially when you need to write something. But it's getting better. Yeah.

R: Do you feel more confident now?

A: I do (pause) because I have a lot more direct client contact, and I contribute a lot more to the content of whole work, and I presented multiple times to clients, and ... so yeah, I can see that I can do that like [comparing with] last year. Even though my English maybe was good enough it's more about how you feeling about you can do it or not. (Extract 22, Int. 3).

Anouk again presents her current professional positioning as compared to her perception of self a year ago, arguing that the earlier decreased sense of certainty in what she was doing has been replaced with a growing confidence in the professional domain. The account above reflects developments in Anouk's "internal" identity, revealing that she perceives herself more confidently not just in relation to her English skills (using the more neutral "anxious" instead of earlier "embarrassed" and "frustrating"), but in her overall professional abilities. Though she presents her changing professional self, building an argument on her cumulative professional participation, she arguably has embraced elements of the "external" social-identity, "ascribed" to her in the workplace, as elements of her self-identity.

Strong levels of reflection on professional performance and positioning, disclosed in Anouk's discourse, evidence the fact that employment in Australia provided her a gradual sense of inclusion, professional development and value, although presenting multiple difficulties and challenges. Her progressively increasing assimilation, reflected in her changing perception of her own professional performance and engagement, is accompanied by and integrally consistent with, a process of social accommodation, as Anouk's professional life overlaps with her social life. This is

evident in the development of her narrative accounts regarding her lifestyle in Australia. Initially, Anouk claimed her determination to maintain here an eventful lifestyle, to fill the “gap” between her current and previous social life:

I was too busy with my social life in Amsterdam, my home. This is different because now I have much more free time. I want to do more painting, I'm going to do another course, in February. And I want to meet more people. So I'm looking for the ways of trying to do and explore more things. I went to Amnesty International information event, and I think, I will go there next month. (Extract 23, Int. 1).

Her rapidly increasing professional engagement, reflected in the statement that “Work takes more and more time” (Int. 2), however, emerges to prevail over social life. In the third interview Anouk reveals that work occupies all her time, not leaving opportunities to participate in any kind of social activity outside her professional environment:

But it's still work. Because I work every day, so it's basically the place where I live. It takes all my time. Because it's a very high demanding job. I'm very, very busy. And I'm very tired when I get home. (Extract 24, Int. 3).

The accounts above show that Anouk's multidimensional lifestyle, which she had in her home country and planned to recreate in Australia, has been gradually transformed into mono-dimensional, with her professional environment and her colleagues shaping the context and the main circle of her communication here.

5.1.2 Social life and self-identification

5.1.2.1 Feeling “European” and “different”

Discussion of Anouk's social self-identification in the new setting usually takes place in the context of her professional environment and interactions with her colleagues, as she joined the workforce soon after arrival in Australia, and has been increasingly

spending more time at work. She draws attention to the fact that she found her job “too fast” and did not have time to properly accommodate herself in the new social landscape, as she had planned:

A: But I also think that if everything still feels a little bit new to me and then I was just a month here [before finding job], in Sydney, I think I needed some ... everything was really fast, so yeah.

R: So you would prefer to have more time before you found job?

A: Oh yeah! Because I expected that finding a job would take me at least two or three months, not four weeks! (laughs) (Extract 25, Int. 1).

Being in Australia just for several months at the beginning of the study, in a local social setting she identifies herself as a European:

R: [sic] So how do you feel being a migrant?

A: (laughs) Um ... I feel very European I think when I'm here. Uh ... yeah. (Extract 26, Int. 1).

Anouk does not categorise herself as Dutch only, though Holland is the only country where she lived before coming to Australia. Her ethnic membership does not appear to play an important role in her social self-identification, as she mostly positions herself more globally and translocally, pointing to a European cultural heritage, upon which she builds difference with her local colleagues:

I feel different from my colleagues, yeah. Because I have another background, and I think there are different things that I am interested in and I value more. It is not that it's better, it's just different. Sometimes it's difficult may be for them or me to relate to each other in a social way to have a nice evening. For instance, yesterday it was a social function, so I did well I think – I stayed all the way in till evening ... They are really nice, very friendly ... But ... Yeah, I don't feel like I feel like an outsider and I miss sometimes the more cultural things that I was used to in Europe, or in Amsterdam – like art houses, and documentaries, and ... I think I'm away a little bit. (Extract 27, Int. 1).

Anouk differentiates herself from her colleagues, pointing to “another background”, different values and different interests, which emerge as having an impact on her social relations here. She admits that it might be a “difficult” social process for both sides, and the extent of the difficulties she experiences is evidenced in her account about the social event at work. By stating that she “did well” just because she “stayed all the way in till evening”, not providing any details about how she spent the evening nor how she communicated with other participants of the function, Anouk discloses that even participation in the event was an effort for her. Her evaluative self-description as an “outsider”, expressions like “I miss [sic] more cultural things”, “I’m away” are the identity markers, which she uses to underline her perception as not belonging to the new social setting.

In further accounts, Anouk provides more examples of “not fitting” into social life in Australia, pointing out that it is not only the context of her professional environment where she experiences difficulties:

A: [sic] I have my colleagues. (little pause) And they are different. I feel a little bit different from them, especially the girls (laughs) a little bit.

R: In what way? How do you feel it?

A: (little pause) Oh ... yeah ... When I look around here, in the evening, for instance, it's also an area we live in, it is always very jet stuffed, lots of make-up, and high heels, and ... I don't know ... I've been asked a few times by people like friends of friends of friends of Mike – Mike is my boyfriend - like: “Did he already give you a ring?” Stuff like that (laughs). I think getting married is very important here. Or it's more than marrying here. Sometimes I'm a little bit more traditional in ways or ... the girls here in my office almost every month they have to go to wedding, they buy dresses ... and ... I don't know ... it's not my thing, I think (laughs). (Extract 28, Int. 1).

Anouk differentiates herself from her female colleagues and the “friends of friends” of her boyfriend saying that she doesn’t share their interests and social practices: “it's not my thing”. Her laughter indexes the boundaries Anouk draws between herself and discourses of “others”. The recurrent discussion of the practice of marriage and the topic of an engagement ring become a metaphorical expression of her attitude

towards the beliefs of some local girls, who she knows:

It's like a ... Why do you depend so much on a stupid ring? It's not ... The most expensive ring doesn't mean he loves you, I think! I heard a conversation about it on a radio, when a woman says: "That's my right to get a ring! That's my right! He should pay for it!" Blah-blah-blah ... So ... I heard a few conversations of girls who were saying it, too, so – yeah, the same thing, I think. (Extract 29, Int. 2).

In the extract above, Anouk uses various devices, not simply to distance herself from the practice of engagement, but to oppose this issue in an emotional and expressive way. By constructing a dialogue with an imaginary opponent; using direct reported speech of another opponent, and accompanying the quote with "Blah-blah-blah", she reflects a view that she finds this opinion uninteresting or has heard it many times before. Her position regarding the cultural practice of marital engagement is partly explained in further accounts, prompted by the researcher's questions:

R: I thought maybe your attitude towards this issue has changed.

A: No! I think at that time because few of Mike's friends get married, they talked a lot about the rings. It was funny. And I think it was the first time I heard about it, when I actually found out this topic. Because back home, none of my friend had a conversation about that. About how important it is to be engaged, or how it is important for them to be engaged. That your partner asks you, and he needs to give you a ring. Yeah, I was quite surprised by it! (laughs) (Extract 30, Int. 3).

In the account above, Anouk uses the context of her home country to make sense of her new cultural and social experience. Indirectly referring to intercultural differences, she attempts to validate her divergent attitude towards the beliefs associated with the practice of marital engagement. Though she discusses her "funny" perception of the issue at the time she had just arrived, her present accounts reveal an unchanged attitude towards it, indicating her resistance to accept and share social practices, which don't correspond with her "residual" values and are of no interest to her. This is supported by her self-claim, prompted by the researcher:

R: Have you changed while you've been here, in Australia? Have you been a different person?

A: No ... I don't know. I think ... not really, I think. It's not my values that changed. No. No. I don't know – maybe my friends they will notice whether I changed. I feel still the same, I think. (Extract 31, Int. 2).

It emerges that Anouk doesn't find many common grounds for interactions with local acquaintances during encounters. Her Australian partner, Mike, appears to be the only person here, who shares her opinions and feelings in the situation of social vacuum she experiences:

A: I feel sometimes a little bit lonely because I don't have my friends around here. And I have my boyfriend, and he is great, but that's not the same (laughs). Sometimes I need my friends.

R: Does he share your feeling of being different?

A: Yes, yes, he understands, because he really likes Europe, as well, and he has been living there for quite a while, so he knows what it's like up there, he knows where I'm from, he knows my family, he knows my friends. So he understands, yeah. (Extract 32, Int. 1).

Anouk maintains an argument that the relationship and closeness with her partner is based on the shared experience of living in Europe and immersion into the same socio-cultural environment, with its values and philosophies they “adopted” and shared. This argument provides insights into Anouk's social identity and a principle for establishing close social engagement with other people: it is fundamental for her to know the “background” and share the same views. She differentiates her partner from local people, as being “non-typical Australian”, pointing out that his views arguably also differ from the opinions of locals:

R: But what do you mean by “typical Australian”?

A: I don't know. Because he [the partner] lived in Europe. He lived overseas for quite a while. He travelled a lot. He has seen a lot of the world. Yeah. He has a very broad view of things. [sic] He is a little bit European to me, I think. Just a feeling. Maybe because I met him in Europe. (laughs) (Extract 33, Int. 3).

The account above contains Anouk's perception of qualities she apparently appreciates in her partner and highly regards herself: "has seen a lot of the world", "has a very broad view of things", while indirectly contrasting acquaintances met in Australia who lack these merits. The distinctions and boundaries, built in the constant comparisons between herself and local people, and her the reluctance to change her perception of and attitude towards some local social and cultural practices reveal her unassimilated view on social life and her unsettled social perception of self in Australia.

This perception of "unassimilated self" might be connected to the uncertain plans for the future, expressed by Anouk in response to the researcher's question:

R: What are your plans for the future? Are you staying here?

A: Well, we'll just see how the things will go. And take it based on there is an option, there is an idea of going back to Holland maybe in two years' time but we just want to stay here for a while.

R: And how the things should go here for you to stay here permanently? What should happen?

A: Uh ... I don't know ... I should feel more at home, I think. And maybe have more social network. Because ... That is what that makes I miss my friends now. (Extract 34, Int. 2).

In the account above, Anouk analyses her current unsettled position by pointing to the important aspects of her life, which are missing – feelings of being at home and her social network. In further accounts, she also brings into account a dimension of family ties, as another significant component, which is absent:

We don't have a family here. Mike's family is from Victoria. My family is in Europe, so ... We'd like to be closer to one of our families. I want to. But for us this is a good opportunity [to live] here. And also for Mike, for his work. And also it's nice to experience this [life in Australia]. [sic] I'd like to stay here for a few more years. And then to decide where we want to live. That's the idea. (Extract 35, Int. 3).

Though maintaining an argument about opportunities afforded by the experience of living and working in Australia, Anouk considers an option to be reunited with her family in Holland in the future. Feeling “different” from the locals, missing her family and not having a social network of her own in Australia, Anouk reveals strong levels of attachment to her social network in Holland.

5.1.2.2 Friends, acquaintances, and language in use

A constant process of comparison in Anouk’s accounts continues in respect of local acquaintances and her friends from Holland, with whom she maintains strong connections:

[sic] my friends [in Holland] and they are great, they are different they are ...
But for the girls that I met here, at my office, they are a little bit girly like ...
They value crowds more and ... (Extract 36, Int. 1).

R: I wonder if your friends here – are they Australians?

A: They are Dutch. My friends are Dutch.

R: Here, in Australia?

A: Oh, no, no! I don’t have like real friends here, no, no. I don’t. (Extract 37, Int. 2).

Maintaining a virtual social network with her friends in Holland, Anouk initially expressly opposes the idea of having “real” friends within her local acquaintances (using six negations in three short sentences). In further accounts, however, she expressed positive views of her relations with her partners’ friends and colleagues:

A: I really enjoy spending time with Mike, and his friends, and his family.
Uh ... (long pause) But, yeah, I miss my friends and I miss my family, and
lots of things are going on that I’m missing right now.

R: But the good thing is that you have got new friends here!

A: Uh (sighs), my boyfriend's friends, my colleagues – I already like them, but it's not ... definitely not the same like my friends at home because it takes time, I think. I share so many things with my friends ... Yeah, I think it takes a little bit more time. (Extract 38, Int. 2).

In the account above, Anouk reveals the markers of the process of her growing attachment to the new social setting, as she points to positive experiences of having time together with new acquaintances in Australia. However, by comparing them to her friends “at home” and concluding that “it's not ... definitely not the same”, Anouk maintains a strong social identification with her friends and family in Holland, constructing an identity through what are becoming more distant relations with intimate others. In later accounts, she attempts to analyse her persistent perception of feeling “different” from her local acquaintances, though claiming that she doesn't find their views unusual or strange:

A: I think it's a little bit different culture.

R: Do you feel it?

A: The same? As them? No, not really. To be honest (laughs). I feel different but (pause) I don't think ... I am different but there is nothing wrong with what they think. But different.

R: OK. So, what do you share with them?

A: Uh ... We talk about ... I talk a lot with one of my colleagues about my family. About my little cousin, and my little niece. And she also has a lot of little cousins. Yeah. What we do on holiday. (Extract 39, Int. 3).

As it evident in the account above, Anouk still does not have many points of intersections with her colleagues and does not maintain close relationships with them. It emerges that her social engagement is not just based on shared (or not shared) values and interests, but is also regulated by different conditions relating to her language skills:

R: What about your social life? Has it changed?

A: Uhu ... A little bit. I hang out with my colleagues a little bit. That's it. But I miss my friends, like my real friends from Holland. It's nothing comparing to my real friends at home. So ... Yeah, [sic] I know them [colleagues] a bit better. Yeah, I know them better, and they know me better. But sometimes ... uh ... I need just to talk in my own language without ... (little pause) sometimes especially that's too noisy and sometimes I can't hear the conversations and it's too fast for me and then sometimes difficult to just have a good evening because of the conversations – I don't understand it or it's too fast or too noisy. (Extract 40, Int. 2).

Anouk points out to different dimensions of language in use, which impact on establishing and grounding her identity in interactions: from the internal factors (“I need just to talk in my own language”), which could be interpreted literally or figuratively, indicating the necessity of speaking Dutch or with people who simply understand her, to the external interfering factors (language, noise, hearing, decoding). She further provides details of some of the difficulties she experiences during her communication in a second language:

I think, sometimes I don't know what to ask, when I don't know a word, and there are some colleagues they don't realise that there is something with their language, and sometimes I feel like miscommunication things, and that's very silly thing because I don't know the word for this, or ... (laughs) (Extract 41, Int. 2).

It emerges that she has to find her “voice” during social interactions, the same way she learns to find her “writing” voice in her professional context. This is a stressful position, as Anouk's self-perception appears to be reduced to novice level in both professional and social settings. Her vulnerable state is reflected in the account about her experience of language related disorientation in her professional field and the way it was perceived by some of her colleagues:

[sic] sometimes I think like I feel that my colleagues they don't understand because they never learnt to express yourself in a different language. And especially at the beginning, when I just started working there. There were so many new words, I didn't know. And also the terminology they used, specific words, acronyms. I really didn't know what they meant. And some people really didn't understand why I was asking some of these questions: “What does it mean?” And they really didn't understand the questions in general. Yeah, it was a little bit difficult. (Extract 42, Int. 3).

Reflecting on her experience with communication at work, Anouk raises the issue of people's awareness of and sensitivity to the difficulties which people from different language and cultural backgrounds might encounter, during the process of communication in general, and while performing professional duties in particular. The issues of empathy and vulnerability emerge as an important dimension in Anouk's narrative accounts of social life, and this is exposed in her different interpersonal relations and through her positioning herself and others.

5.1.2.3 Defining and positioning herself through positioning of others: Australians, migrants, and refugees

Anouk's social self-identification is connected to the new social order she encountered in Australia, and she discusses her sense of self by pointing to different social systems in her home country and in her current country of residence:

R: Do you feel like a Dutch in Australia – or like Australian?

A: Uh ... I feel sometimes still ... I feel different, in some ways. I think, I see things we don't have in Holland.

R: Can you please give me examples?

A: I think, the social system is different here. And education. Healthcare, and education, and schools, work – it's different. Also sometimes the emphasis that some girls have here on being engaged, so the whole concept how it works ... Okay. (laughs). It's different, too ... (Extract 43, Int. 2).

Alongside the differences in societal organisations in Holland and Australia, Anouk mentions again the cultural and social practice of marital engagement, differentiating and distancing herself from "some local girls". Her interactions with co-workers serve as a main source of her perceptions of Australia and Australians, as she positions the wider community according to her perceptions of work colleagues:

R: Have you got any opinion about Australia and the Australians?

A: Uh ... (long pause) I don't think they are that different from any other Western society, what I've seen so far, from the world ... I've seen some things in the politics right now it's quite interesting (laughs) ... but they are just ... I don't know ... I think they are very kind and welcoming and ... but I refer that to my colleagues at work because I have to work ... I have to work with them every day, so... I like the multicultural aspect of Sydney but I guess it can be very, very different in a very you know rural area ... sometimes, yeah ... Also discrimination, maybe ... (Extract 44, Int. 2).

Anouk's analysis of her perception of Australia and Australians ranges from characterising Australians as similar to people from other Western countries to indexing discourses of politics, multiculturalism and discrimination as "points of interest" present in the Australian social landscape. Her reference to the multiculturalism of Sydney, containing an indirect definition of Australians as a multicultural group, reveals her self-identification and a sense of belonging to the multicultural community of Australia.

Anouk's reference to "discrimination" is both "other-defining" as well as "self-defining". It is expressed in direct connection to local discourse at work, and with respect to migrants in her home country. It is not something she has experienced in her new residential setting, as is evident in a following account, subsequent to Extract 44 above:

R: Can you tell me a bit more about that [discrimination] please?

A: Oh, whatever! Sometimes people are talking about that ... That is also the same in Holland. About ... Maybe in smaller towns people have another opinion about foreigners ... About migrants ... About people who don't speak the language ... Yeah ...

R: Have you ever experienced such attitude towards you?

A: Uh ... No, not really. But it's also I think largely because I live in an area, in Surry Hill [metropolitan district] here. It's very mixed ... yeah ... (Extract 45, Int. 2).

Anouk's account regarding different and arguably unwelcoming attitude of locals towards the "foreigners", "migrants", those "who don't speak the language" is a

residual perception based on experience in her home community. These perceptions are drawn upon to make sense of her experiences in the new setting. In the following account, she extends these perceptions to her education and work experience as a language teacher to migrants in Holland:

I actually studied linguistics and I also studied Dutch as a second language about second language acquisition and after that when I graduated I worked for a few years, three years I think, as a teacher for foreigners who came to Amsterdam, immigrants, and I taught them Dutch. (Extract 46, Int. 1).

In a further account, Anouk places herself in an opposite social context of being an immigrant, comparing her past teaching experience to her current position as a person who needs to improve her second language skills:

I know that I've improved [English] a lot but (pause) and also because of my background I studied linguistics and I taught people Dutch as a second language. And I know I've seen it from the other key point as well ... That it's frustrating and I'm experiencing it so it's quite interesting but (pause) yeah (laughs). (Extract 47, Int. 1).

Reflecting on the experience of “others” learning a second language, Anouk analyses her perceptions of learning English, and projects her view on learning L2 in accordance with her repositioning from a teacher to immigrant self (“I’ve seen it from the other key point”). It is evident that this experience is turbulent for her, as she labels her current perceptions with contradictory expressions like “frustrating” but at the same time “interesting” almost simultaneously, and accompanies her account with laughter, which underlines confusion she expresses. In the new social setting, Anouk experiences the clash between the identity of a “teacher” and a “learner” in the same field, while affirming her positioning as a “migrant” and a “foreigner” and paralleling her own experience of learning L2 to the experiences of other immigrants.

Notwithstanding the challenges she experiences, Anouk shifts her self-analysis to a sense of being privileged, when compared to those newcomers whom she considers disadvantaged, displaying her social position towards refugees and asylum seekers:

I think, I have skills to find my way myself. But ... And I think, when I compare my situation with for instance, the refugee, I really don't need any help. Really. I'm fine. I can find my own way. Yeah. If there is ... If they [government] should decide on what to spend, please spend money on refugees and asylum seekers, not on me because I have the skills and I have the opportunities to find my own way and to ... Yeah. (Extract 48, Int. 2).

She further develops her sensitive attitude towards disadvantaged groups in her discourse related to refugee migration:

A: I think, it's quite interesting to see how with the politics I think how they treat ... every Western country is struggling I think with migrants, or with refugees, and yet – and the elections ... and ...

R: And what do you think about migrants?

A: Oh, well, I don't know, it's such a complex discussion – how to help the people who travel by boat, and what is the best way to help them, that and ... It's all over in the newspapers every day, I think (laughs). (Extract 49, Int. 2).

The expressions she uses to frame her opinion on this issue – “how to help”, “the best way to help” – evidence her compassion towards vulnerable people. Her perception of social justice finds its reflection in her professional engagement, when she prioritises projects which require strong levels of social involvement:

I like research or projects that are more vulnerable, or social disadvantaged population or population groups, when you can really feel: “Yeah, what you do maybe really help improve something, to help people”. (Extract 50, Int. 3).

Anouk's narrative accounts regarding disadvantaged and vulnerable people show a high level of sensitivity towards these groups, reflecting somewhat her vulnerability in the new settings. In the account above, she uses self-reported direct speech to support her perception of increased professional input not just at the level of performance of duties, but also in terms of a possible positive social impact on the lives of disadvantaged people. Her growing professional participation, accompanied by appropriation of a more literate voice, allows Anouk the appropriation of a new social and cultural voice in her new professional and social setting.

5.1.3 Summary

Interviews with Anouk revolve around the discussion of her professional capabilities in English in Australia in comparison to similar professional duties executed in her native language in Holland. The issue of mastery of English language plays a fundamental role in Anouk's professional self-identification in Australia, as she directly connects her perception of professional self with her level of English language. The assistance that she receives from colleagues to improve her language skills, has its advantages and disadvantages: while acquiring and borrowing professional terminology and style, she experiences feelings of embarrassment and frustration with the loss of her "writing voice". Anouk's accounts reveal that sometimes the lack of her knowledge of professional English makes her feel "insecure", not just about her job, but in terms of her overall self-perception.

In discussing her current and previous professional positioning, Anouk reveals mixed feelings about the need of starting a career in Australia from a junior position. Her narratives also disclose her concern about performing professional duties at the lower standards, however acknowledging that this concern might exist "in her head" only as she is supported and praised by her colleagues. The dissatisfaction with her performance, based mostly on her self-perception and personal standards, not only motivates Anouk to improve her knowledge of English and professional status, but "forces" her to "work" to address both external and internal dimensions of her identity in order to re-gain professional confidence. Being promoted, she reveals positive developments in her professional self-perception, showing growing

confidence and embracing elements of her “external” social identity projected by her colleagues. These modulations of professional identity emerge as one of the most significant aspects impacting on Anouk’s sense of self-identity during the time of her employment in Australia.

In the domain of social relations, which are based mostly on interactions with her colleagues and her partner’s friends, Anouk positions herself as “European” and “different” from her local acquaintances. She points to differences in cultural and social values as a basis to perceive herself as different to the Australians she has met, while positioning her Australian boyfriend as having values and qualities similar to her own. Anouk’s “residual” values and opinions brought from Europe seem to serve as a restraint to establishing close social relations. As she is critical of the values and beliefs of local acquaintances, she reveals her reluctance to accept them; her friends in Holland are the only social group she associates herself with. Loss of her social network, language difficulties encountered in social interactions, changed lifestyle, and differing interests and social values are all aspects impacting on Anouk’s sense of an “unsettled” self in relation to the multiple contexts and positions described in her accounts.

Anouk reflects on changes in her positioning in terms of her professional downgrading as a researcher, taking conflicting professional and social identities as a “teacher” and a “learner”, a “professional” and a “novice”, a “migrant”, and a “skilled migrant”. Her reflection on these multiple identities, and comparing and contrasting them, arguably allows Anouk to “interpret” her current position, connect it to her previous experiences, and connect it to a future which is uncertain and contains an option of returning to Europe.

Linguistically, Anouk’s identity work is manifested in an interplay between the narrative accounts discussing her life, work and professional positioning (the “story world”), and the relational and textual work she engages in with her interlocutor during the discussion of social relations (the “storytelling world”). Anouk’s narrative accounts evidence her unassimilated view of social life in Australia, though revealing signs of her developing appreciation of the local environment and her sense of social self here. Her identity claims are usually made through a process of differentiation from “others”, with laughter often embedded in her constructions as an indexical

boundary maker between herself and local acquaintances. She uses self-reported direct speech to “add weight” and reflexivity to her claims about her experiences, co-constructing her self-presentation and maintaining an uninterrupted life story in a dialogic relationship with the researcher.

5.2 AMIR

Introduction

Amir is a 32-year old Civil Engineer from Iran, and his native language is Persian. He graduated from the “best” (according to his statement) national university in Tehran and worked in his country of origin as an engineer for 5 years, before moving to India, where he worked for 4 years as an expatriate in his professional field. Amir has an Iranian wife, who accompanied him while working in India, where she studied fashion design. They migrated to Australia 5 months prior to the first interview, and Amir was actively searching for professional employment, while casually working at hotels. One year after arrival Amir received a scholarship and started his PhD study at an Australian university in order to have an income during a period of unemployment, and while still searching for a job in his professional field. Soon after he found a job in the construction sector and left university.

The discussion of Amir’s social and professional self in Australia becomes dominant in all three interviews. The themes of “freedom” in Amir’s system of social values and the issue of professional engagement emerge as major themes during his settlement, though initially the topic of professional engagement was not presented as important. The weighting of these themes might be explained by particular expectations and beliefs, held by Amir prior to immigration with respect to various domains of life in Australia. It is evident that some of his expectations were met, such as his ideas of “freedom” and his perception of social inclusion in Australia. However, his expectations of being professionally accommodated in the new country were not realised as quickly as he anticipated. It emerges that Amir’s perceptions about different aspects of life in Australia have undergone significant changes during the time of his residence here.

Amir’s discussion of his educational and professional credentials and substantial work experience is another important theme across all his interviews. This is the basis upon which he builds an argument about his worthiness to live and work in Australia. Additional theme that emerges here is that of Amir’s insufficient knowledge of English language, as he repeatedly points to his undeveloped English

language skills as a major obstacle in building a successful career of an engineer straight away.

Another important theme emergent in Amir's narrative accounts is connected to his employment strategies. The process of seeking employment, constantly adjusted by Amir in accordance with his changing perception of various aspects of reality, significantly impacted on his sense of social and professional identity. Being an unsuccessful job applicant for over a year, Amir re-evaluated his professional goals and modified his employment strategies on several occasions, trying to enhance his chances to secure the desired employment. It emerges that his PhD study served an important role during this process.

Amir's identity work, noticeable in his presentation of self, is built in response to the researcher's questions, demonstrating the highly co-constructed nature of some aspects of his self-identification. Characteristically, Amir's accounts have a structure which consists of introductory general remarks, followed by personal information, concluding with an evaluative statement as a form of topic resolution, connecting content of his narrative accounts to its subjective assessment and representing the emotional and interpersonal level (Labov & Waletzky, 1967; see also Hoffmann, 2010). His recurrent intercultural comparisons of life in Iran, India, and Australia reflect the transitional stage of Amir's current position. While building these comparisons, Amir's consistent positive evaluation of Australia and its social order signals that he embraces an Australian lifestyle and positions himself firmly within the local setting. The identified themes and discursive features of Amir's narrative accounts are further elaborated in the following analysis.

5.2.1 Social and professional self: expectations and reality

5.2.1.1 Search for "liberty", "freedom", and "understanding"

Amir's accounts reveal that the themes of politics and work, existing and interconnected, are the most recurrent themes of his discourse throughout all interviews. It emerges that there is tension between these themes, which is woven

into his discussion of life, professional engagement and career development in his previous environment, where political freedoms were more limited and regulated. For example, when discussing reasons why he decided to immigrate to another country, Amir asserts the importance of living in an unrestricted political and social environment:

Ah, you know ... ah ... It's more about the political condition of my country. May be a little financial condition but mostly it was political condition to me. You know, the limitations was there, and there were so many problems – I don't want to go to details but it was more social problem than financial about the work, because I had the work there, I was a good engineer, so all the companies needed to work with me. But I decided to be in a country which have more freedom. [sic] Liberty (laughs). That was the point. (Extract 1, Int. 1).

Amir maintains an argument that being employed, having an income and being professionally recognised as a good specialist was not enough for him in his previous life, referring to social values and political freedoms that were influential in his decision to immigrate. He discusses the issue of politics as a dramatic contrast between previous experiences and his Australian experience:

You know, I can say, this [Australia] is a free country. Ok (laughs). If I compare at least with my country (laughs). I haven't seen any other countries. I've been in India. There is also democracy there, it's a free country but (little pause) it is not comparable to here [Australia]. It's completely different. There/there/I think, politically [pause] politically migrants are not going to involve into political issues too much, as I know. (Extract 2, Int. 1).

... [sic] in my country, you know, everything is molested with politics (laughs), even my/your work, your private life because the government wants to have control of everything: your private life, your work, how you think, how you speak. So ... it is a little annoying. But here [in Australia] we don't have such issue. (Extract 3, Int. 1).

The concepts of “freedom” and “liberty” are recurrent in all Amir's accounts, and he discusses these subthemes in connection with various lifestyle aspects, such as alcohol laws and “pub” culture in the countries where he has resided:

A: You know, some things are prohibited in my country. For example, alcohol is completely prohibited. We drink alcohol there (laughs), but it is

illegal (laughs). You should buy it from the illegal persons just it is very expensive.

R: So, you are enjoying drinking habits here.

A: Yeah. Drinking freely, actually (laughs). Sometimes my friends say: “It is not exciting drink freely (both laugh). It’s good to drink if you hide it”. Yeah, sometimes we just gather with friends in a pub and drink. Go to the clubs. Which is completely prohibited in my country. (Extract 4, Int. 2).

Pointing to previously illegal social “rights” to drink alcohol and visit clubs, Amir enjoys gaining these privileges in Australia. To support and re-enforce his argument, Amir “brings” into his narratives reported accounts of his friends, other Australian Iranians, who share his affirmative attitude towards the “freedoms” of the new society and make jokes about their current and previous experiences. Being humorous about alcohol laws in his home country and Australia, and marking his account by laughter, Amir becomes more serious when he discusses differences in women’s social rights:

You know, in my country all the women should put scarfs and they have some limitations that regard. Uh...But they don’t like to do that, that’s not coming from their heart, they don’t live in it, they have to do it. So, when they come here, they have more freedom, it is very interesting for them to be free. (Extract 5, Int. 2).

It is evident that Amir perceives different aspects of social life in Australia in terms of political freedoms, which are fundamentally different from Iran. Using evaluative indexes “very interesting”, “more freedom”, “to be free”, Amir keeps emphasising the importance of political freedoms in different domains of life. His constant comparisons of the environments, where he has lived, reflect processes of acknowledging and distinguishing specific features of different countries. For example, Amir compares the lifestyles of Iran, India and Australia in terms of social relationships:

A: ... [sic] In terms of lifestyle, I can say, that is not much different from my country.

R: Really?

A: Yeah. Uhm ... because (pause) Maybe it is more different from India because I was in India, I know their traditions. Social relations, you find these things are same. I think people are same over the world (laughs). (Extract 6, Int. 1).

Discussing social relations at a personal level, Amir points to overall similarities in all countries where he has resided, in an attempt to bridge his previous and current experiences. However, in further accounts he analyses social relations at an intercultural level, pointing out to differences:

Of course, it is different. I lived in Iran, in my country for twenty something years, I lived in India for four years. Here it is completely different. In both places the traditions ... you know ... ah ... I can say what is different – the way people think about different things. Ah ... And ... I really like it, you know. (Extract 7, Int. 2).

Identifying and analysing intercultural differences, Amir is positive in his evaluation of his new social reality. His perception of being successfully adjusted to Australian cultural and social settings is reinforced by further accounts: “I found an Australian culture is very easy to adapt. It is not something difficult”. (Extract 8, Int. 2).

It emerges that Amir’s argument about an easy adaptation to the local environment is based on his view of Australia as a multicultural country and on the circulated discourse that Australia is a country of immigrants:

You know, Australia is a combination of all cultures. People from all over the world come here, so ... When you speak to the person, when you communicate with them, they know – you might be from different culture. So, they don’t surprise if you do something (laughs) that is weird for them, strange for them. But maybe in other countries they may react differently. But here everybody, you know, they expect you to do something that may be seem stupid for them, but they accept it: “That’s a different culture, OK, that’s Ok” (laughs). (Extract 9, Int. 1).

In this account, Amir indirectly associates himself with people, who might say or do something that is perceived as culturally or socially “weird”, “strange” or “stupid” to other Australians. This interplay of “you” and “they”, as well as various evaluative indexicals signal Amir’s sense of differentiation from the locals. This distinction is emphasised in the imaginary reported speech of Australians, whom he sees as tolerant and accepting of the behaviour of different cultures. Such perceived tolerance is explained in another account of people going through the experience of immigration, similar to his:

You know, here, in Australia, you can find more migrants than Australians. So most people are in my condition or experienced such condition, so they completely can understand you. (Extract 10, Int. 1).

It emerges that for Amir his perception of Australia as a country of immigrants seems to make the process of his adaptation to the new social and cultural settings easier and stress-free, as he considers Australians “completely” understand his difficulties and worries. While Amir refers to a majority of Australian people as “immigrants”, presenting himself as a migrant amongst other migrants, he discloses concerns about being “different”. These concerns are expressed in further accounts, where he is cautious about his perception of social contacts with locals, in regards to his projected employment:

I like Australian people. I think they are ... friendly ... as far as I see (laughs). I don’t know I haven’t worked seriously with them yet, and you know working on some occasions completely different. Working is going to be more serious and more maybe ... harsh I mean ... So, so far it was OK with me, yeah. (Extract 11, Int. 2).

Amir distinguishes between relations during “social activities” and at work, and expresses concerns regarding the prospect of working together, which are indexed with expressions like “I don’t know”, “more serious” and “maybe harsh”. His narrative accounts reveal insecurity in his anticipated construction of working

relations with the local people, though pointing to his “friendly” reception by Australians in social contexts and his overall positive social experience.

Australia emerges as a desired place for Amir, as he has discovered social values he could not find in his home country, and as such he embraces Australian social life. While his narrative accounts expose some concerns about his future relationships in the realm of work, they reveal his positive orientation towards various aspects of Australian social life. Amir is satisfied with his search for “freedom” and “liberty”, and his expectations about life in Australia have at this point been realised. It emerges, however, that despite the claims of the importance of having political “freedoms”, the discussion of the political impediments in his previous life overseas, as well as direct connection with political life in Australia, is missing in his discourse. It is, rather, a particular style of life that captures him in Australia. It also becomes evident that his search for “political freedoms” alone does not make his life complete and happy. Amir’s predictions of finding work were initially more optimistic, and the discussion of professional employment becomes an important theme in his accounts.

5.2.1.2 Identity modulations according to changing employment plans and perceptions of the future

Amir’s accounts reveal that initially political freedoms were valued more by him than the issue of professional engagement. This is evident in previous and future accounts about his reasons for immigration, where he argues that professional engagement was not the main goal he pursued:

Actually, when I wanted to come here, I just resigned my job. It was ten days before I came here I resigned my job and came here. If I wanted to work there [in Iran], there was an opportunity for me there. But yeah. You know, job wasn’t the reason I immigrated here, in Australia, actually. It was so many other reasons combining with that. (Extract 12, Int. 2).

Amir considers immigration as an opportunity for realisation of ideals, which he claims as important for him, such as “liberty” and “freedom”, not just as a way to transport his professional skills to the new country of residence. While positioning himself as a valuable and respected specialist in Iran and overseas in the accounts above (“I was a good engineer, so all the companies needed [wanted?] to work with me”, “If I wanted to work there [in Iran], there was an opportunity for me there”), Amir maintains an argument about the priority of “other reasons” for his decision to immigrate, not assigning the first place to professional employment. Nevertheless, the theme of professional employment gradually becomes a dominant theme in later accounts. In discussing the process of adaptation to the new settings, Amir points to professional engagement as the only component, which is missing:

... the only problem I have here is [not having a] job. If I find the job, I will be completely happy. (Extract 13, Int. 1).

I can say, that’s the only problem we [his wife and he] have here. If you find job and financially support you, I don’t think we have any other problems here. (Extract 14, Int. 1).

Amir initially didn’t seem to worry about finding professional employment in Australia, as he held positive expectations in this respect, based on his friend’s opinion and his “research”, made prior to decision to migrate:

... at the time I was making decision [about immigration either in Australia or to Canada], I had a friend, who applied already for Australia and gave the information about Australia, the condition here, and I can say, persuaded me on this. [sic] And also I researched about this country and I think here, in Australia, finding job is easier than in Canada. (Extract 15, Int. 1).

Amir’s account reveals that his initial ideas about employment in Australia have undergone significant transformation after his arrival in Australia. He discusses this change comparing his ideas “before” and “after”:

A: Before getting here, I was thinking about having my own business. Maybe my own company or something like that. After I came here, it’s a little change

there (laughs). And at the moment I just thinking of getting work and then getting promotion, reaching the manager level, and I don't know after that. I really didn't have time in these five months to think about life-term goals.

R: But you do have some expectations, don't you?

A: Yes, to reach at least some managing position in my field of work, engineering.

R: Do you have any experience running a company?

A: Uhm ... I was a manager of some departments but not running the whole company. No. (Extract 16, Int. 1).

It is evident that Amir's professional goals and his perception of his professional future have changed since his arrival in Australia, from starting his own business to finding a job and building his career as an employee. This transformation is rather ironically described by him as a "little change" and marked with laughter, contradicting the concerning content of his story. Amir's accounts reveal his dreams of opening his own company without any previous experience in establishing and managing a start-up business. These accounts demonstrate his idealistic expectations of life in Australia and his imagined professional positioning in local settings. The concerns that develop between Amir's anticipations and the present unemployed migrant status are reflected in his frequent comparisons of situation "before" and "after" immigration to Australia, revealing a growing confusion and uncertainty about the future:

R: So, being almost for a year in Australia, what are your perspectives for your future here?

A: Mm ... It's hard to say, you know, it's really changed, you know, from the road to Australia the thing was in mind was (pause) At the beginning I was thinking I could find job very fast, and then I can, ugh, step by step, take the ... I don't know ... Improve ... In my job, in my life and take ... Erm ... (Extract 17, Int. 2).

Amir admits that his perception of a professional future has "really changed" during the year after his arrival in Australia. Referring to experiences of other immigrants

in envisioning his employment expectations, he points to the reasons beyond his control, which prevented the realisation of these expectations:

R: And why did you think so? Why did you think you could find something very fast?

A: Uhh, it was like that before, so many of my friends came to find job in three or four months ... But ... Hmm ... Maybe it is my ... I really was unlucky because of the condition especially in the construction suddenly changed ... especially from the date I came here ... it gets worse and worse every day (Extract 18, Int. 2).

Amir's further attempts to explain his unsuccessful efforts to secure employment in the field of his expertise demonstrate his knowledge about local market tendencies and employment conditions:

Before that, for example, in 2009, even in 2008, 2007, in especially my profession you could find job very fast. There were so plenty of positions. I could look for them. But now you can have four or five years of experience here, in Australia, and get redundant from your job. They [people with experience] are looking for a job, like me (laughs). Yeah, my thinking is quite changed, and (pause) I don't know (pause) maybe I should start something first year and then I decide what really I want here, in Australia. But the highest point I want to reach. (Extract 19, Int. 2).

Amir's awareness of the declining economic situation in his industry and the workforce cuts change his "thinking" and push him to reconsider again his perception of how to professionally accommodate himself. He is uncertain about his present prospects to secure a job, positioning himself in relation to people with "experience here", who are also seeking employment and seem to have an advantage. He is also uncertain about his professional plans, conveying this with expressions like "I don't know", "maybe", "then I decide what I really want". However, it emerges that Amir is determined to advance his career as soon as he finds a job, and this is evident in the above account ("the highest point I want to reach), as well in all his claims about his professional future.

Referring to his friends' international experience, Amir connects the issue of migration to professional engagement:

A: I have so many friends in the US, United States. I have friends in Canada. And, you know, in my country I can say most of people in my level, in my condition migrate to other countries. I have more friends abroad than in my country (laughs).

R: Uh! Did they migrate for political reasons?

A: Yeah. You know, I can say, for better life. They find it better in other countries. And some of them [got] really promoted, really working good in the other countries. (Extract 20, Int. 1).

Using expressions “really promoted”, “really working good” in evaluating his friends' professional progression, Amir reveals that his perception of a “better” life is linked not just to professional employment but also to a career growth, which will lead to a particular social positioning:

If I find the job, I think I can at least reach the lifestyle I had there [in home country and India]. And after some years, maybe, possibly be in higher position. (Extract 21, Int. 1).

I think ... If I find a job this is always I can do it very fast. I can do it very fast. Maybe in less than five years. To reach the place that's always been in my mind. (Extract 22, Int. 2).

A: I think if I enter [working] somewhere and I can demonstrate myself and (coughs) improve very fast.

R: Professionally?

A: Yeah. (Extract 23, Int. 2).

Amir's determination to “reach the lifestyle” that he previously had and to achieve the level of a higher social standing is connected to a sense of social self-identification, brought with him to Australia. His reported positioning within the social system in his home country is discussed in the following account as a response to a request for social identification from the researcher:

R: How would you describe yourself in your country, in terms of your social position, in terms of your profession, in terms of what you were doing there? Did you belong to middle class, high class, something in between? How would you describe your situation?

A: Uh ... I can say/ you know there are different classifications ... Socially maybe I was high class because I am educated person, I was educated person, and all of my friends were from high class. Financially, I was middle-class (laughs) (Extract 24, Int. 1).

The account above is an example of co-constructed presentation of self, when the researcher provided categories for a discussion and analysis, and the interviewee “followed” the directions and portrayed himself from a social perspective. Amir grounds the claim about his and his friends’ belonging to the upper social class on his educational credentials. He also points to his previous professional achievements in India and Iran:

R: And when you went to India, was it career progression? Have you advanced your career?

A: Yes. I started there as a project engineer, and when I finished I was a senior technical manager there. And when I came back to my country, I could continue as a senior person. (Extract 25, Int. 1).

In the following account, Amir reveals the reasons for the adjustment of his professional positioning after immigration to Australia:

R: And when you decided to go to Australia, did you hope to find a job as a senior engineer here?

A: No. I knew it wouldn’t be easy to find job in the same level, actually. But anyway, when you are going to a new place, even to a new company, they won’t put in a senior level. You have to start from a junior position. But if you show yourself, they promote you fast. Here, in Australia, I really expected to find job faster. (Extract 26, Int. 1).

Amir’s views on professional downgrading when transferring from one workplace to another outline a practical approach to the prospects of finding job at a lower level after migrating to Australia. He reconsiders his professional ambitions and the

necessity for their adjustment according to his changing perception of reality. It emerges, however, that relocation to another place is not the only reason for the lower professional start, as the issue of the second language is presented by Amir as an important element, which impacts on his prospective employment and forces him to alter his professional plans.

5.2.2 Language as a factor influencing professional positioning and a barrier to employment

While English was a language of communication at work in India, where Amir reached a senior managerial position, he considers his second language skills as not good enough to start working as a senior professional in Australia, but appropriate to secure a job at the lower level:

... one of reasons I say I prefer start work here in junior engineering position is that because first I have to reach high level of English and then I can be senior. (Extract 27, Int. 1).

A: [sic] I can find the job. I mean, the level of English is good to find the job. I can do the job. I can do. But ...

R: So, your knowledge of English is enough to find job in engineering?

A: Yeah. But after that, if I want to have promotion in my job, I have to, you know, work to improve my English, especially my speaking and writing. And the other issue is if you don't find job you can't improve your English speaking, even by taking courses or by reading books. It is not possible. You have to, you know, participate in something, some social activities. (Extract 28, Int. 1).

Amir adjusts his professional positioning according to the perception of his English skills, and expresses his readiness to start his career in Australia from the lower position. He argues that a professional environment is the only setting where immigrants can improve their knowledge of professional language. While professional employment remains a remote prospect for Amir, he finds a casual job

to improve his English skills. He points to the process of acquiring second language as a twofold practice, when not only is he learning English, but other people learn to understand his speaking:

R: You told me you were going to find some casual job probably just to practice English.

A: Actually, I did some casual job for a period of ... I think two or three months ... May be more, three or four months. I was working in a pub. It was good. It had me ... specially gave me some confidence in English with Australian people to understand their accent. It was mentally hard, because it is completely different, and they can also understand my accent. When I speak to British language person, it is very ... easier actually to speak with them, to communicate with them. They can understand me easier, but to Australians ... it is a little difficult. (Extract 29, Int. 2).

Being somehow positive about his experience in communicating in English, which is marked by evaluative “it was good”, “gave me some confidence”, though “mentally hard”, Amir distinguishes between “British” and “Australian” language and expresses uncertainty about his effective interactions with Australians. This is partly explained by the fact that his contacts with English-speaking persons are limited and occasional, as he mainly communicates with the representatives of his ethnic community, as is evident from his accounts:

A: I found some friends here – which is good.

R: Are they Australians?

A: Uhhh ... Mostly Persians (laughs). But yeah, I have some Australian friends. Not originally Australians, they were born in Iran but you can say they are Australians, anyway. Yeah, I have some Australian friends, which is good.

R: Do you speak Persian language when you get together?

A: Mostly, yeah (laughs). (Extract 30, Int. 2).

Amir’s insecurity in his English language skills is further revealed in his accounts about job interviews he had, both face-to-face and over the phone:

At the beginning I had actually two interviews, with two city councils.[sic] That's normally an interview with three persons, panel, how they call it here [sic]. And one of them was you know a telephone interview, over the phone. That was really hard for me because when you see somebody it is really easier to react to them. But you know I couldn't understand one of them [a panel person]. He had a very special ... accent. So, I couldn't answer his questions. Could answer the others' two questions but it was really difficult for me. [sic] For other interviews, it was more or less the same. (Extract 31, Int. 2).

Amir refrains from raising personal language difficulties in his further accounts, this time discussing the problem as common for all skilled migrants and positioning himself as a member of this group:

... telephone interview is a little bit difficult for us, skilled migrants, because if are you sitting in front of somebody, from the gestures and these things you can understand better but over the phone it's hard to understand. (Extract 32, Int. 2).

Amir's analysis of language difficulties, he encountered during the interviews, such as understanding an accent, and problems with the detached communication over the phone, demonstrates his growing awareness of the "weak" sides of his English and his understanding of the problem:

R: Do you believe your level of English can be a barrier in finding job here?

A: Of course, it is. (Extract 33, Int. 2).

To sum up, Amir's accounts reveal insecurity in his level of English language and readiness to start his professional career in Australia from the level lower than he achieved overseas, partly because of his awareness of his second language skills. Though Amir's professional and academic language proficiency (Cummins, 1979a, 1979b), developed through his previous professional engagement, is reported by him as strong enough to perform his professional duties, it emerges that it is his undeveloped basic interpersonal communication skills (Cummins, 1979a, 1979b) that are a barrier to his employment. He however keeps maintaining an argument about his determination to advance his career as soon as he secures a job, which is expressed in multiple references to career promotion after reaching a "higher" level

of English (Extracts 27 & 28), thus showing confidence in his educational and professional credentials.

5.2.3 Professional and educational credentials and their correspondence with the local settings

Amir's confidence in relevance of his professional credentials to the local job market is expressed in the analysis of the specifics of his profession, which he provides in response to the researcher's question:

R: Do you think it is different in terms of professional terminology, professional jargon from your home country?

A: Mm ... Status – no. It is more or less the same. You know, engineering is based on science. That basis is the same everywhere. Maybe some conditions are different, for example, in my country, we have frequent earthquakes in different places. But here, in Australia, we don't have earthquakes. So, when we want to design a structure (laughs) here it is very easy because

R: Yeah, you don't need to take it into account.

A: Exactly. So, something is different but the main thing I think is the same. And I think it won't take long time for me to catch up everything and could be a good engineer here. (Extract 34, Int. 2).

In this co-constructed understanding of the nature of engineering and its specific application in different countries, Amir uses the pronoun “we” referring to engineers both in his home country and in Australia. It emerges that Amir argues the international character of his profession and classifies engineers as one transnational professional group, also positioning himself translocally. “We” in the context of Australia also identifies Amir as one of the “locals”, though he closes his account with a statement that he still needs to learn some nuances to be “a good engineer here”. This position is re-stated in further detail:

... some standards are a little bit different but you know their base is the same. For example, in some formulas some coefficients are different. So I think it is easy to adapt to be engineer here. (Extract 35, Int. 2).

Amir compares his speciality with the professions, in which overseas standards, from his point of view, don't match the local standards, forcing people to learn their profession again:

Maybe it is different with other industries. In marketing, I think, it is completely different. I had a friend here. He was an accountant in my country. Actually, when he came here, I can say, it was impossible for him to find job here, because the rules and regulations about the accounting is completely different here and the only way he had, I don't know, was go to TAFE [college], study something first, go to the university and after that start job as, you know, person without experience. The fresh person (laughs). (Extract 36, Int. 2).

It is evident that Amir is happy with his discipline, which is universal and therefore provides him with extra credentials to become competitive in terms of securing employment:

R: So, you don't need to get any additional qualifications to work here, in Australia.

A: Aha ... No. It is ... you know ... It is not a big deal to have some qualifications. For example, in science, safety. We call it "OHAS" – occupational health and safety. You need to get it here, it's a bit different here. But it's not a big deal. You just get a course for that, for that qualification.

R: But you haven't done it yet.

A: I did, actually.

R: Uh, you did?

A: Yeah (laughs). It is a privilege to have it. We call it "white card", that's an induction card for health and safety, industrial, something like that. Yeah, I did it. (Extract 37, Int. 2).

In the dialogue above, Amir uses the expression "we call it" twice as a marker of his belonging to a group of professionals in his field. He also uses specific vernacular, like "white card", obviously common within his professional circle, explaining the meaning to the researcher and demonstrating his awareness of some differences between the local and overseas professional settings. However, he is confident in his professional capabilities and his ability to adjust to the local requirements, and this is underlined in his repeated remark "It is not a big deal".

Amir's adjustment to the local professional environment also included membership with a professional organisation, which might potentially increase his chances to gain employment in his field of expertise:

A: (laughs) I got my membership at the Institute of engineers of Australia.

R: Uh, you've got it! Because you told me previously that it was quite expensive and it wasn't worth it. Congratulations!

A: Thank you! It's better to have it done! It actually didn't get me much, but maybe it would in the future. (Extract 38, Int. 2).

Amir's accounts demonstrate his active and enthusiastic approach towards the process of his adjustment to the new environment. His flexibility in his search for a job is also reflected in the range of the employment strategies he uses, and their modification according to his changing perception of various aspects of life in Australia.

5.2.4 Employment strategies

5.2.4.1 Online applications, social networking, and online applications again

Amir's search for work in Australia consisted of applications through the job web sites:

R: So, you are here, in Australia, for five months. I wonder how many times you applied for a job.

A: Too many times. (Laughs). It is ... may be ... I have a database of all the jobs I applied. It is more than three hundred jobs I applied.

R: Three hundred? Did you get any response?

A: I had two interviews; I'm waiting for the answer for one of them, at the moment. Uh ... I had some, you know, they call it "chat", with recruiters, and (little pause) that was all. Yeah. (Extract 39, Int. 1).

Amir provides further details regarding his conversation with the recruiters, using their direct speech to add an "authoritative" voice (Bakhtin, 1981) in reporting their

advice to him:

Most of them [recruiters] suggest me just go and directly apply to the companies, instead of ... They tell: “Don’t waste your time with the recruiters (laughs), actually”. So ... but some others still getting the applications, the resume and try to find jobs. But mainly, I can say, they are helpless – recruiters. It’s better to directly go to companies. We will have more chances with the companies. (Extract 40, Int. 1).

Amir acknowledges the advice to send job applications directly to companies, using “we” and arguably speaking from the generalised position of skilled immigrants, while showing awareness that the practices of employment do not always make it possible:

Most [vacancies] advertised by the recruiters. So it is less likely to find advertise directly from companies. They are only very large scale companies that you can find advertise directly. The small companies hire through recruiters. And so (little pause) in large companies also it is not easy to find a position. Other thing is there that it is government organisations, like city councils, or state organisations. That’s also good chance. I got interview once with a city council. And I think it’s also good to try. (Extract 41, Int. 1).

Failing to gain employment through job web sites, Amir shifts to a tactics of social networking in his search for a job, drawing his interlocutor attention to this shift:

A: And I wanted to tell you something about finding job here, actually.

R: Yes.

A: The best opportunity to have job here is through your friends. The best opportunity I had here was through my friends, through my Australians and native friends her. I mean, they introduced me to a company and to a person and I just gave them my CV and passed it to the Human Resource at this company, and they called me and asked for an interview. So, network is very important. (Extract 42, Int. 2).

While being positive about the prospects of finding a job using social networks and personal contacts, Amir however was unsuccessful in his application, as he relates the story:

... the last interview I had, and it was good. It was one of the positions proposed to me by my friend. He was a senior engineer, senior project engineer in the company, and there was a position in his area, they wanted a project engineer [sic]. And then suddenly they faced the problem (laughs). [sic] They said to me to wait. But it looks that it is true once that the position is put on hold. They said me: “Wait” but I can’t wait for them. (Extract 43, Int. 2).

Despite Amir’s efforts, his accounts reveal that entering professional environment becomes a difficult issue, as he struggles to secure a job in his field, and the situation impacts on both emotional and financial aspects of his life:

If I want to compare them [feelings] to the feeling I had at the beginning, when I came here, I think it’s a little bit (pause) worse (laughs). Because the main reason is because if you don’t find job (little pause) in a proper time, may be. If I had a job at the moment and a good salary, I think it would be very great place to stay and live. You know, it’s a very expensive place (Extract 44, Int. 2).

Being unable to gain employment in a “proper” time, Amir expresses a fading idealistic perception of life in Australia, conditioned by his deteriorating financial situation that has its impact on his family relations:

R: Ok. And your relationship, because you don’t work for almost a year

A: Uhu ... You know, it was a hard time for us, both of us, and the past ten months, I can say it (pause) I can say it was the worst time, we had but maybe in some term it made our relationship stronger because both of us passed the hardship ... [sic] but yes, sometimes it is really difficult. Yeah. So, we are struggling. (Extract 45, Int. 2).

Multiple negative evaluating indexicals, such as “worst time”, “hard”, “difficult” reveal Amir’s reflection on his stressful experience of being unemployed and not in demand professionally, as well as disclose his frustration and the pressure of not

being able to support his family (“we are struggling”). This situation forced him to search for other opportunities to sustain his sense of self both in professional and family domains. Such an opportunity is presented to him when he finds a position as a PhD student at one Australian university and receives a scholarship.

5.2.4.2 PhD study in Australia as a means for financial survival and an unexpected pathway to securing employment

The process of becoming a PhD student at a local university is presented by Amir as a stress-free and pleasant development:

R: Was it easy to find a supervisor?

A: Yeah. Much more easier than finding a job (laughs). Literally, I applied for three or four supervisors for a position here, [sic] and one of them actually, she just told me to send her my proposal and was really interested in me, I mean, as a student. So, I think it is easy, yeah, it was easy for me to find the PhD position. (Extract 46, Int. 2).

Amir compares his experience of becoming a PhD student with his ineffective search for a job in Australia, marking it with an ironic and sad laughter on this occasion. He repeats evaluative expressions “much easier”, “easy”, referring to the process of his PhD engagement, and uses a reference to an academic who “was really interested” in his candidature to arguably recover his deteriorating confidence by attempting to present himself as a valuable PhD student. He indirectly compares the Australian career achievement of a person from the same educational institution as proof of the quality of his own education:

And you know, I graduated from very good university in Iran, and here, in Australia, good universities know my university back in Iran, they know that’s a good university, it has so many good students. Here, the senior lecturer is from my university (laughs). (Extract 47, Int. 2).

Although portraying himself as a person with a good educational background and a successful student with the prospect of getting a doctorate degree, Amir considers this opportunity mainly as a temporary measure to financially support himself and his wife while he is searching for a job:

I think it was just by chance – I got scholarship from a lecturer. So/so it's better than doing nothing (laughs). (Extract 48, Int. 2).

But anyway, I'm still applying for job. And I think if I find a job I might leave my PhD studying. (Extract 49, Int. 2).

It is evident from his further accounts that Amir not only discards his prospective PhD degree as a pathway to the Australian workforce, but rather considers it a “burden” on his way to employment:

I have heard from my friends that it won't help, you know, when you got a PhD or Masters ... the companies ... the thing is just ... PhD degree overqualified for almost all of the positions, so they prefer to employ just Master, for example, or just Bachelor because they need to pay them less (laughs). The PhD persons, they have to pay them more. And I think Bachelor person can do their job. (Extract 50, Int. 2).

Referring to his friends' discouraging opinion on the issue of having higher qualifications, Amir however admits that ironically it was on advice from his friends that he started doing a PhD:

Some of my friends told that in this condition on the market, with jobs, it's better to start something, anyway, than to sit at home and just apply for jobs (with a smile), you know, all applications bounced, you know. Yeah, some of my friends here, they came here four years ago. [sic] And they suggested I should apply for some university. (Extract 51, Int. 3).

Amir's accounts demonstrate that his friends' opinions are essential to him, as he perceives their advice and information as reliable and practical. Several months of

PhD study, initially suggested by his friends as a solution to a temporary financial problem during the search for a job, however, impacted on Amir's situation more significantly than he expected.

Amir's attitude towards undertaking PhD changed after he eventually found job in his field while doing his higher degree research. His PhD study, which he earlier considered as "better than doing nothing" turned out to be a preferred pathway to the new social and cultural settings:

And now I suggest it [PhD study] to my other friends. You know, it's good to try what you can at the beginning, study or anything. (Extract 52, Int. 3).

If I come back to my country and apply for a visa, I apply as a student. (Extract 53, Int. 3).

To start a PhD and slowly find your way into community (Extract 54, Int. 3).

In the account above (54), Amir argues that successful engagement with a new environment requires time, and PhD study allowed him to have this time while also providing some financial support. His short PhD experience played an important role in gaining employment in Australia:

I just told them [potential employers during the job interview] that I did these [tasks] before, and that at the moment I was doing research at the university. And this research worked actually for me, because they knew: "This guy could enter the university here, so he had a certain level of language, at least, they [university] accepted him". (Extract 55, Int. 3).

Amir perceives his PhD study as a "recommendation" to potential employers, which "proved" his sufficient level of English language and his educational credentials. While admitting the positive sides of doing a PhD, Amir didn't want to proceed with

his study: “I don’t think I’ll continue. I think I don’t really need any qualification” (Extract 56, Int. 3).

He admits that after gaining professional employment he has to learn additional information to perform his duties, as the new position is not in his speciality:

The type of things I’m doing is not what I’ve done [before] but it’s civil engineering, anyway. I have an experience in civil design but you know here in Australia, it is a bit different. [sic] At first it was a bit challenging. I had to study at home how to do the job (with a smile). But it is good now, after three-four months [since] I started. (Extract 57, Int. 3).

Amir again shows his readiness to adjust his professional capabilities to the required level and direction. Though claiming that it was “a bit challenging” and “a bit different” from what he experienced previously, he is positive about his present state. His excitement at having work is expressed in his description of how he secured his employment:

A: It was the big change. [sic] And it was, you know, exciting for me to find the job like that. And it wasn’t through networking or anything like that (laughs).

R: How did it happen?

A: I just saw an advertising on the internet, you know, seek dot com, and then I applied for that. Before that I changed my resume and the things. I worked on my resume, really, for that job. And I sent my resume, and there was a call from them: “Come in, see you, have a chat, interview”. So, I went there, had a short conversation and then they asked me to prepare something, to see how I can write a report and that sort of things. [sic] And they were happy. (Extract 58, Int. 3).

Amir points out that he found a job independently of his social network, and worked on his resume specifically to address the requirements of the vacancy. In his further accounts, he reflects on his previous job searches and reveals that he made adjustments to his professional identification in connection with his language skills:

I made a big mistake when was looking for jobs in construction. This requires high level of English. And when I realised that I completely changed my resume. (Extract 59, Int. 3).

Amir also reflects on his overall experience of living in Australia, and makes a confession that it was a time of unusual experiences and fighting for “things”:

You have to fight for so many things. The last thing is getting job. After this you are getting back to routine life, regular life. The things are routine from now. You need to improve in your job. (Extract 60, Int. 3).

Amir returns to the issue of professional development, which was a recurrent topic in his previous accounts. Connecting to the earlier question of professional growth with his English skills, he points out that employment impacted on his self-perception in this and other respects:

Definitely, it changed me. I feel stronger. I’m very shy. But now I have courage to start speaking with people. I never started first before. [sic] You need to reach a level of confidence to find a job. (Extract 61, Int. 3).

5.2.5 Summary

Amir’s accounts revolve around two interconnected themes: the theme of social values, associated with the ideas of an “unrestricted political environment” with the concepts of liberty and freedom; and the theme of professional engagement. Portraying himself as an accomplished professional with substantial work experience, Amir points to the absence of political freedoms in the country of his origin, which he presents as a main reason for his decision to immigrate. His discourse, however, reflects a generalised account for perceived political impediments in his home country, with minimal connection made to specific issues of political life in Australia. This indicates that political freedoms and social rights might have been idealistic rather than practical reasons for his immigration.

Embracing Australian social life and showing a strong attachment to the newly found social values (also evidenced in his choice of an Anglo-Saxon pseudonym), Amir

however expresses uncertainty about his fitting in it. This is evident in the discussion of his perception of Australia as a country of immigrants, where, according to him, any “weird” and “strange” behaviour of new-comers is accepted and understood (arguably perceiving himself as a “strangely” behaving new-comer). His concerns about the construction of future working relations with locals reveal insecurity in his positioning and self-perception in the new setting. Data show that Amir’s sense of identity undergoes changes in line with his gradually changing perception of various aspects of life in Australia, and this is described by Amir as “my thinking has really changed”.

The change in Amir’s perception is arguably provoked by the mismatch of his expectations and reality. While Amir’s expectations about social life in Australia with its freedom and liberty were somewhat realised, they were transformed during the period of his residence. His expectations about his employment prospects, however, changed significantly. Planning to start his own business on arrival in Australia without any previous experience in managing a company (and thus demonstrating his idealistic orientation towards his perception of professional environment here), Amir had to modify his professional goals to become an employee. Multiple external and internal obstacles, encountered during his search for a job, such as a market downturn and insufficient English language skills, made the point of entry into the professional workforce a sensitive issue for him for more than a year.

The discussion of Amir’s job seeking experience, in comparison to his earlier beliefs about professional engagement, reveals the “modifications” to his sense of identity in this respect, though Amir keeps maintaining an argument about his high educational and professional credentials, and, therefore, attempts to sustain the sense of his professional self. He tries, however, adjust himself to the new environment, and the trajectory of his adjustments is reflected in the application of the various strategies he uses to improve his second language skills, secure work, and financially support himself during the period of unemployment.

Knowledge of English language was identified in Amir’s interviews as an important theme preventing him from starting his professional career at the level he perceives as professional, and his casual work in pubs was motivated by his decision to practice

speaking and improve his second language. His PhD study was initially considered simply as a source of an income and something that was “better than doing nothing”. However, it emerges that Amir’s short involvement with PhD studies played an important role in gaining employment, serving as a “recommendation” of his good level of English and his overall competence. In his further accounts, Amir defines his PhD experience as a preferred pathway to social and cultural adaptation to the new environment, as it provided financial support while also allowing time to become immersed in new settings.

The modification of Amir’s employment strategies reflects the process of his changing from idealistic to more practical perceptions of various aspects of life in the new settings and his flexible and active approach towards adjustment to these settings. Starting his search with the job advertisements on the web sites, he switches to seeking jobs through social networks and relies heavily on the contacts within his group of friends, mostly from his own ethnic community. In order to increase his chances of gaining employment, Amir becomes a member of a professional organisation and gets additional local licences, though experiencing financial hardship. His search becomes successful when he independently finds a job via an internet job seeking site, adjusting his resume to this particular vacancy and again modifying his professional goals. The process of adjusting his professional identity, goals, and strategies to the demands and reality of the market reveal the steps of Amir’s adaptation to the new professional settings.

Discursively, Amir often constructs his narrative accounts using direct and indirect references to experiences and opinions of other immigrants – his friends, who mostly represent his ethnic community and who migrated to Australia earlier. He creates his membership with different groups, such as the overall migrant community, which, from his view, shapes Australia. He associates himself with skilled migrants in general, as well as with professional engineers in particular, thus positioning himself both locally and translocally. Using various evaluative indexicals, he constantly compares social and cultural features of the different environments where he has resided, demonstrating the transitional stage of his adjustment to Australian social and cultural settings. His accounts provide evidence of aspects of Amir’s identity as co-constructed in dialogic relationships with the researcher.

5.3 GABRIELA

Introduction

Gabriela is 32 years old and was born in a small town in Brazil. She holds a Bachelor's Degree in Journalism and Master's Degree in Communication from a Brazilian university. Her native language is Portuguese. She worked as a journalist for a large newspaper in Brasilia. In Australia, she studied English language, planning to return to her home country. However, due to different personal circumstances, Gabriela decided to stay in Australia permanently, and applied for and was granted a Skilled Migrant visa. She then studied for and received an Advanced Diploma in Marketing and a Certificate IV in Vocational Education and Training. While a student in Australia, she had casual jobs as a waitress and a party organiser. Currently Gabriela works full-time as a tutor in Marketing at an international college and is also invited to organise various catering events at an Australian university.

The three interviews, conducted with Gabriela are characterised by a large number of narratives ranging in length from a 100 to a 1000 words. The processes of her identification and changing perception of herself and the world are most evident in her discussion of recurrent and interconnected themes of profession, language (both native and English as a second language of communication), and employment. These themes are discussed by Gabriela in constant comparison with her past and current social and work experiences, and in relation to her changing understanding of her professional goals and capabilities in various contexts and circumstances.

The process of Gabriela's professional and social engagement and adaptation is influenced by various factors and new experiences, such as unskilled work and perceptions of discrimination. In order to adjust herself to the new settings, Gabriela applies various strategies, and the concept of "investment" emerges as an important strategy in this process, including investment in strengthening English as a second language, social networks and potentially in higher education.

Characteristic of all Gabriela's narrative accounts is that she continually presents herself in relation to other groups of people, thus building the "relational" self, rather

than “referential” only. Her self-identification takes place in constant comparisons of “international” versus “local”, “active” versus “passive”, “white” versus “black”, and this process of defining herself and others becomes another important theme emergent in all the interviews with her.

Gabriela’s discourse is strongly linked to the concept of investment (Bourdieu, 1977, 1984, 1991; Darvin & Pierce, 2015; Norton, 2000; Norton Pierce, 1995), with performance and positioning being distinctive discursive features (Bamberg, 1997; Bauman, 1986; Bauman & Briggs, 1990). These theoretical concepts provide the basis for analysis of Gabriela’s identity work in the following paragraphs.

5.3.1 Profession, language and employment as the major scenes for identity shifts

5.3.1.1 Professional self-identification: uncertainty and re-evaluation of professional goals

The importance of and satisfaction with professional employment as a journalist in Gabriela’s life back in Brazil is demonstrated in a claim made by her at the very beginning of the first interview:

G: I was a news reporter. So, basically, it was about interviews, report writing and everything. And I did this for (little pause) how many years? In total, I think, I did this work for eight years. And also in a web [sic] company I was for three years, I think, in PR [public relations]. So, for most of the time I did work in the newspapers, daily newspapers.

R: Did you like what you did?

G: Yeah. Very enjoyable. Very, (little pause) very enjoyable. You know a lot of things, you are always in rush, you know, watch more than people can believe. And there is a lot of confidential information that we had, so I know I wasn't supposed to use (inaudible). And there are noble people you know, so ... (Extract 1, Int. 1).

The account above is part of Gabriela’s process of professional self-identification and “location”, which is, according to Wenger (1998), an identity construction marker. Gabriela displays her commitment to her profession and discusses its

specifics, drawing attention to the significance of possessing high-level language skills in performing her professional duties:

G: I think the language is my tool_(pause). So, I'm a journalist, and I used to work with language every day in Brazil working daily newspapers, so where I need to be very careful about how to choose the words, every kind of single one, because you can like (inaudible) for a person or damage someone's image or damage a company image, so it's kind of danger, so work is kind of dangerous sometimes, but like I can see language as a tool. I/this is how I believe I have a second tool now. I did well, I was educated and I learnt anything in Portuguese, now I'm using English.

R: Do you feel privileged because you have two tools now?

G: Yeah, that's an advantage for me as a journalist. (Extract 2, Int. 1).

The high level of language skills needed to mediate communication risks in her professional environment is emphasised with indexical references such as “careful”, “damage” and “dangerous”. Gabriela uses these expressions not just to describe, evaluate, and dramatize specific features within her profession, but to justify and verify further statements presented in the interviews and, arguably, to “prepare” her interlocutor for the development of her accounts of professional employment. These indexicals, which highlight professional risks, are fundamental for the ongoing processes of Gabriela’s professional identification, as they hint at her declining confidence in securing a job as a journalist in Australia, with English being her non-native language.

This decreasing confidence in her professional capabilities becomes noticeable when Gabriela arrives at the point of discussing her search for skilled work in her field of expertise in Australia. Her initial statements in relation to her prospects of finding and securing work in her professional field demonstrates her positive attitude. However, there is an emerging tension between the two worlds of Gabriela’s account: the world of the story and the storytelling world, as is evident in the following example:

My [English language] course is finished, so I translate my real resume and apply. And I was like kind of successful in this thing, I went to interviews, there were some calls then. I think I went to like eight or nine interviews. So I noticed that my resume was something that I was ah ... something ... maybe good for the local market ... err ... (Extract 3, Int. 1).

In her story world, Gabriela describes her attempts to gain professional employment in the new settings as partially successful: “I went to interviews, there were some calls ...” Nevertheless, there is an insecurity, expressed in Gabriela’s storytelling world, as is evident in the construction of the concluding sentence in the above small narrative, when uncertainty about her professional standing emerges: “I was err ... something ... maybe good for the local market ... err ...”. The use of the hesitation marker “err”, probability adverb “maybe good”, multiple pauses in describing her perception of her professional positioning in Australia, as well as her reference first to her resume – not to herself – as being “maybe good for the local market” – all signal uncertainty and a level of insecurity in regards to this issue.

This uncertainty is expressed further, in response to the question “What actually would you like to do [in Australia]?” At this point, Gabriela is explicit in her belief that she would be unable to perform her professional duties as a journalist:

I know that I'm not able/I'm not completely confident to do what I'm used to do in Brazil. What do I mean in Brazil - to write three or four materials every day. I think this is too much English to me. (Extract 4, Int. 1).

Gabriela expands further her concerns regarding her knowledge of English, highlighting her proficiency in her native language by saying that in Portuguese she used “to play with words”:

As a journalist I am use to *'play' with words* and it is very hard to do it when you are using a different language! (E-mail 1, the original punctuation of the participant is kept; italics added by the researcher).

Gabriela’s reflection on her command of English leads to the re-evaluation of her perception as a professional and to repositioning herself as not competent enough in

her professional field in the new environment. Recognising that she has to modify her sense of professional identity according to the new conditions, Gabriela nevertheless tries to match her perceived level of education and professional skills with advertised work opportunities. She continues to apply for vacancies in the field of journalism, communication, and media, as is evident in Interview 2:

G: I'm like having to organise myself better still (laughs) and come back to apply for more more working in my/ still communication is still more more more or less something better theme like in my education and ...

R: Aha! So, are you still looking for job opportunities in your field?

G: Yeah!...Well, I've been more selective now like choosing work...And like I'm choosing more and spending more time in every application...[sic] Like sometimes I'm having like working in the criteria and blah-blah-blah ... Things that I didn't use to do that much before.[sic]

R: Have you been invited to an interview?

G: No! This is why I'm surprised! Because if I'm working on the position and an application by the lodge it should be getting in thing. So I don't know.[sic] I maybe going to change my strategy in next weeks. I don't know maybe I just to call people and notify that I'm going to apply for the position or just to see what this company is like. Maybe just achieve like applying/Do you know LinkedIn?

R: Yes.

G: I don't know, maybe to search people who go like ... (Extract 5, Int. 2).

Gabriela's approach to searching for prospective jobs changes: she has become more aware of the steps of the process of job application, such as addressing selection criteria, and is more thoughtful about the goals she wants to achieve. However, despite her efforts, the outcome is discouraging and she considers applying different strategies such as establishing personal connections to improve her chances to get desired employment. "Investment" in social and professional networking becomes Gabriela's main tool in searching for professional employment, as is evident from her further accounts.

It emerges from the above and following examples that Gabriela not only tries to change her strategies in gaining professional employment, but she also makes efforts to adjust her professional identity according to her transforming perception of reality. Reframing the theme of her lack of confidence and ability to work as a journalist in the example below from Interview 3, Gabriela again discusses it in relation to her level of English and marks a new path for her professional engagement:

I don't feel that/ I'm not going to apply any more for journalism positions, like news reporter. Because I think I have a good level [English] but I think to be writing three to four materials every day for newspaper it's kind of like hard ... And everyone can like write and read in English ... And the style of writing is different than the style of writing in Brazil. So I don't apply/I'm like going towards positions where there are more communication in general ... Marketing, yeah, something like/be more open to my like/My position then will be OK. Journalism writing – nuhu. (Extract 6, Int. 3).

This narrative becomes Gabriela's argument against her own ability to perform her professional duties as a journalist in connection with her emerging awareness of her level of English language. In structuring her narrative as a list of duties she is incapable to perform, Gabriela positions herself as being unable to meet the expectations of her existing professional identity. Her sense of professional identity is arguably changing in connection with her declining confidence in the possibility of improving her English language – her “second tool”. These processes impact on Gabriela's self-identification and provoke a shift in the direction of her job search towards a field where high level language skills are not necessarily needed.

Initially coming to Australia to study English language and improve her English language skills, Gabriela was determined to advance her career as a journalist in Brazil:

This is why/a reason I came to Australia to study English, because English it was necessary for my profession ... And I'm got to have more/have a better job, money if you have English. Uh ... even if we don't use English all the time in Brazil every day, it's/I could have more opportunities like to work in

the big newspaper or whenever, and grow up in my career with English. Even applying for a positions like in PR in a company, I could get more money. (Extract 7, Int. 1).

Gabriela's investment in learning English was aimed at acquiring "a wider range of symbolic and material resources" which could in turn "increase the value of her social capital and social power" (Darvin & Norton, 2015, p. 37) and lead to professional promotion and development of a stronger financial position in Brazil. These were previously marked as important for Gabriela in her life in her home country, as she pointed to the subjects of profession and money as the driving forces for her "investment" in English language. However, Gabriela's experience in searching for work in a field of her second language as a skilled migrant has led to the realisation that this sense of professional capital linked to English language has diminished. Her social capital and social power have also diminished. This experience results in a transformation of Gabriela's initial aims and values, shaping new layers of her professional and social identity over time under the influence of these different circumstances.

5.3.1.2 New social experience as the source for identity shifts

Gabriela's changing perception of herself involves not just the re-evaluation of her professional capabilities, but also includes significant changes in her system of overall values, with work in her professional field once being the primary focus. The shift in the system of values is visible in Gabriela's discussion of work conditions and people's attitude towards their careers in the working environments in Brazil and Australia. Gabriela builds her argument using multiple contrasts and repetitions:

People are easier going related with work, I think [in Australia]. So no one is going to look strange to you I think if you are going to finish work at five and go home at five. In Brazil we do extra work each time and don't get paid. And everyone is going to be pretty upset if you are going to leave like when you were supposed to be until you finish your work. And it's very competitive, I think, much more competitive, than Australia. I heard that everyone [in Brazil] wants to graduate. You need to have Masters, you need

to have PhD, you need to like have (inaudible) all the time, you have to have more education, more education, and wow! And what about the time for your life? The time to go to the park, and to the beach and do this kind of things? (Extract 8, Int. 1).

Linguistically, Gabriela contrasts the ways people approach work in both countries, and intensifies her account on differences in professional environments by using multiple “repetitions with systemic variations” (Bauman, 1986): “competitive”, “more competitive”; “you need to have ...”, “you have to have” four times, “more education”, “more education”. The purpose of using these linguistic devices is arguably to dramatize her narrative, to make the accumulative effect of Gabriela’s arguments more significant to herself and her immediate interlocutor. By closing her narrative with the rhetorical questions, Gabriela lays emphasis on the point of her discussion, revealing her changing attitude towards the balance between career and lifestyle.

It is argued that rhetorical questions have “the formal properties of assertions rather than of questions” (Han, 2002, p. 203). The illocutionary force of an assertion may reflect the opposite polarity from what is apparently asked (Sadock, 1971, 1974, cited in Han, 2002), meaning that a positive rhetorical question may also have the illocutionary force of a negative assertion, and vice versa. The rhetorical questions in the end of the above narrative, like “And what about the time for your life?” manifest both self-directedness and multi-directedness (use of the collective “you” includes the immediate interlocutor), and are arguably indicative of a shift towards the recognition and establishment of another system of values and priorities in Gabriela’s life. These new values appear to be less related to the professional sphere, and more to her personal and at the same time general interests, such as the search for happiness, harmony, and balance.

This shift to reconsideration of her values is, arguably, provoked and invoked by the conditions of immigration, as an effect of arriving in, and experiencing another environment and reflecting on new circumstances. One of these new circumstances is her time as a student of English language in Australia:

... I was just working. Working to pay the school, to pay the bills. It was like very survival ah, very low level of life. And I think, you learn to de-value the things, as well, much more. And appreciate the little things like [?] with my experience with no food, no breaks, I enjoy much more sitting at the table and eating more properly nicer food. Things before: “Well, it’s just food”. There was a moment when you like learn to enjoy little things. (Extract 9, Int. 3).

In the above extract Gabriela draws the lines between three different contexts: her “previous” life in her home country; experience of survival in Australia; and a current, more stable and reflective position, which she acquired through reflection on her past experience. She compares events in Australia, when she went through a period of not having enough food, to the times back in her country when she had a job, a good salary, and the food was easily available to her but it went largely unnoticed (“Well, it’s just food”). Gabriela’s identity work as transformation is visible in the way she juxtaposes experiences from the past and present, resulting in new appreciation for “the little things”. The emergence of new layers of Gabriela’s identity is also evident when she “travels” between past and present lifestyles, contrasting and evaluating her experiences in Brazil and Australia:

Well, in Brazil I used to work a lot, and in the evenings I stayed in the office. And here I do more physical activities, yoga, I run, and I go to the parks, and have picnics. I like go to beach. I wasn't looking for a beach in Brazil, like everything was far. Here I have a better quality of life, I think. But still missing the work point, which is quite frustrating. I think: “Oh, I'm quite qualified”. But I hope the things get better. (Extract 10, Int. 1).

Gabriela’s evaluative statements “I like go to beach”, “I have better quality of life” make it explicit that she embraces an Australian style of life and enjoys her recreational activities. However, this is juxtaposed with concerns for profession and education. Her use of self-directed speech (“self-talk”, Vygotsky, 1978), shared with her immediate interlocutor, manifests not only a need to outwardly express the need for a professional self, but to reinforce an inward sense of a professional self in the midst of the new and varied lifestyle she is experiencing. Evaluative indexicals in

combination with self-reported speech, while dramatizing and strengthening Gabriela's argument, mark the shift to the theme of profession and education as more salient. Gabriela draws her interlocutor's attention to the point that her educational credentials and professional identity are a major concern to her, marking a sense that her ongoing professional identification is in a turbulent, unsettled state.

5.3.1.3 New work experience as a resource for a changing self-perception

Acknowledging that work is a significant part of life, Gabriela tries to professionally accommodate herself in Australia by taking multiple directions, as is evident in the chronicled account of the jobs she took while studying English:

I did a lot of restaurant work, as well. I did (pause) basically, agency and restaurant work, with this hospitality thing. But I also did like voluntary work here, already. I did work for the Cancer Council of NSW, and this was not/I did not have any money ... And I also do some freelancing for Brazil, the biggest Brazilian newspaper, and I also do - have been doing some freelancing here in English and like local companies, blah-blah-blah. (Extract 8, Int. 1).

Gabriela is eager to be engaged with various types of work, and her work experience and its consequences in new settings also impact on her identity. It is evident that some jobs she had were important not for material benefits but for her personal commitment and satisfaction, and these dimensions are reported by Gabriela as becoming prevailing priorities in her life:

I know I wanna change something better in life, because of ... something better more like ego, which a bit of money more, still I'm going to be happy. I can consider something that I'm going to be happy, like maybe working for a not-for-profit organisation, or doing things like that would be nice, but I'm not going to be working for life in a company, doing boring office job to make some coins. (Extract 9, Int. 1).

The extract above demonstrates aspects of Gabriela's imagined future, with the idea to be happy, both personally and professionally, as an evolving factor, which influences her actions and indicating a newly emerging sense of identity. She is going to adjust her identity according to her new goals – “change something better in life ... I'm going to be happy” – and different types of jobs – paid, volunteering, skilled and unskilled are manifest of the process of Gabriela's altering her preferences in life according to her changing understanding of her future and her goals. While pointing out that she is happier here due to a more comfortable and relaxed lifestyle, Gabriela however acknowledges that professional employment is very important to her, and she strategically applies different methods to get this employment.

5.3.2 Agentive “investment” as an overarching strategy of engagement and adaptation

It is noticeable from the following extract that Gabriela considers unskilled work in Australia as one of the ways to access a variety of English language networks and an opportunity to “invest” in improving her English:

... And, of course, you know, [in a restaurant] you also talk with different people, different accents, different/ (inaudible) I've contacted with so many foreign students, so everyone like different accent, different way to speak: slowly, quick, or whatever. You kind of improve your (pause) hearing ... (Extract 10, Int. 1).

Despite acknowledging the benefits of practising English in the workplace, Gabriela decides to quit her employment. This decision is based on Gabriela's perception of being unequally treated in terms of payment:

[I worked] in a restaurant, for my two days, and continued until I found up that they paid me nine dollars or something. It was too odd. I think the minimum was fourteen or fifteen. Better just to concentrate in the study for the first place and work for the second one. (Extract 11, Int. 1).

In the extract above, Gabriela establishes new priorities at this stage of her life: studying – first, working – second, thereby conveying her disagreement with the payment inequality, even though she needs to have a source of income. It is an expression of Gabriela’s view of her “rightful” position and fair treatment in society. This extract exemplifies Gabriela’s agentive position, when she does not just declare her views but also acts according to her perception of justice. In this sense, agency is viewed as the accomplishment of a social action (Ahearn, 2001). Bamberg (2016) argues that agency as a component of identity is better understood through examination of directions, which people take in order to “fit” the world: in Gabriela’s case, it emerges to be a “person-to-world” direction, where “the self-positions a sense of self as highly agentive” (p. 6).

Darvin and Norton (2015) point out that “it is through desire that [language] learners are compelled to act and exercise their agency” (p. 46). Gabriela’s desire to get access to the employment related environment and be socially included in Australia forces her to agentively “invest” not only in learning English but in other domains of her life. The “investment” strategy (Norton Peirce, 1995) emerges as a main tool Gabriela employs in order to achieve her goals. Arguably, this strategy is rooted in Gabriela’s social and cultural capital, as she reports on the practice of strong investment ideology in her home country:

... if you gonna have something [in Brazil], you kind of need to study, and if you study well and you already not enough have a bachelor degree, and if you want to achieve like a better position, you need to have like a postgrad and Masters, like MBA and like/and to go and to get MBA or anything like that you have to know another language. Probably English. Maybe Spanish. Sometimes. So, it’s like general pressure for everything. If you want to earn money, you need to study more. And it means also languages. (pause). And I guess people also want better life, and even if you have a better job like you need to be much more competitive than here. (pause). In general. (Extract 13, Int. 2).

In the example above Gabriela points to the necessity of “investment” in education,

including learning additional languages, which are needed to achieve particular social and financial status in Brazil. In Australia, after completing an English course, Gabriela also received a Diploma in Marketing and a Certificate IV in Vocational and Educational Training, which led to her employment as a tutor of Marketing at an international college:

I do teach one discipline that's called "Marketing opportunities". So, it's very basically marketing thing. Like ... It's very ... very basic ... and they have public relation and this type of things which is easy for me, very similar, so, and tied with my training, life experience and education. (Extract 13, Int. 2).

This employment marks a shift closer to Gabriela's educational qualifications and the type of work she had previously in Brazil. However, in her response to the question "Is that what you wanted [in terms of employment]?" Gabriela is unconvinced by the positive sides of this employment. It emerges that she wants to make an "investment" in building social relationships and creating networks:

Not really. Not at the end ... It's just something that ... [sic] give me more chances to know people or ... It's like a medium, medium to something else, I hope ... (Extract 14, Int. 2).

For Gabriela, this job is rather an opportunity to establish relationships and to meet people, which might lead to another job opportunity, and give her access to a university as a preferred place to be employed:

And at the moment I'm very focussed at Uni. And they have a lot of things open. I apply like for different unis, as well ... And/I don't know, I think they are like they pay better, the environment is better, and ah there is more possibilities than at the private companies. That's my feeling. Yeah. (Extract 15, Int. 3).

Gabriela speaks about an imagined work that will match her level of education and her experience:

I think, I'm going to be working in the position for my level of education. And I'm going to make minimum like eighty or ninety [thousand dollars per year], but it's still getting in this business properly. So much/whatever I consider work, I'm learning here ... (Extract 16, Int. 3).

Gabriela's investment strategies are connected to her imagined future. The following extract provides the details of Gabriela's investment in the process of professional networking, though not in the anticipated professional field, but in an environment she considers desirable (she was offered a three-month contract to organise catering events for one Australian University, where she worked as a caterer previously:

I signed a contract with the college, and when the University approached me, they said: "Well, we are going to cover this person for like six weeks". "OK, six weeks is OK". "OK, we need two more weeks. Oh, no, ten weeks! Three months! Can you stay like until the end of the year?" I mean, I stayed much longer than I was expecting and it was planned ... So, that was funny the way that happened ... It was very funny the way they just liked me. I get along with them (Extract 17, Int. 3).

The account above is illustrative of Gabriela's identity performance. Using multiple repetitions and direct reported speech that adds details to the narratives and re-enacts the scene, Gabriela dramatizes the narrative, and animates her story through this storytelling style. This extract is also an example of Gabriela's involvement strategy (Tannen, 1989), designed to "immerse" her interlocutor in the story and keep interest in, and alignment with, what is being narrated. This reconstructed dialogue between herself and her employer aims to add other voices to Gabriela's argument about herself as a professional in high demand, reinforcing and making it real. She constructs and presents her image of a valuable specialist (even though not in her professional and educational field), building on her employers' reported narratives, "affecting" and "enacting" "what one names" (Butler, 1995, p. 93).

In establishing connections within the community to which she wants to belong, the academic environment, Gabriela is motivated by the prospects that she will benefit from her strategies:

Contacts, yeah, contacts. The money, like, I didn't need it. The work like I did it before. And the job – the tasks – they are not something ah that is like well. It was just a little bit higher than I was already being doing like it was a step up from the waitressing thing. Step, but it's not like: "Oh, my God!" No, it was most purely for the contacts and I'm going to see if that's going to work now. (Extract 18, Int. 3).

I have to manage all the meetings at the vice-chancellor office. So it was like in an admin building, so I met everyone from like Uni. All people like Human resources/I was at the marketing department, this position was like at the marketing department. So, it was interesting because I like built the contacts with them, and now I am like applying for things and they are like helping me with my applications... (Extract 19, Int. 3).

From the above extract (19) it emerges that Gabriela has started benefitting from her "investment" in social connections with a university's employers, as they assist her with her job applications. She also uses this work as an opportunity to "promote" herself not just as a catering specialist, but as a professional with a degree, and to prove that she is employable in a higher status and position, claiming that she is now an "insider" to the environment:

... when I apply for thing – they know me, and it's funny because I know how things work. Because now I send e-mails, they reply like in five minutes or something. So, they know me, and like I was there I was telling them that I was doing this for, well, because I kind of ... need money they need to pay me better. I have education and I'm looking for something that I really know. You do what you have to do which is like manage events, and clean, and do things, but you are telling everyone that you don't want to do catering more, that I have education, have like. (Extract 20, Int. 3).

It is evident that Gabriela's preferred path of professional and social integration into mainstream society rests upon establishing ties with the members of the host community. She "invests" in building and gaining positive recognition of her personal characteristics, capabilities and credentials through actively arranging social connections (Valenta, 2009) in the environment she wants to be associated with. However, her "investment" strategy in professional networking doesn't lead to the desired professional "upscaling" as is evident in the narratives below, when Gabriela seeks advice and support from the authorities in charge of making employment decisions:

... I noticed that I'm still like/even speaking with people that work at Uni, management, top management thing – there was a position, and I wanted to apply, and they said: "Don't even apply, don't even bother to apply, because you are not going to get it. You are international". And I say: "Oh, OK", that I mean like ... I also say: "Wow, what about anti-discrimination, equal opportunities, blah-blah-blah?"(speaks with ironical intonation) What about your selection criteria? Say, where? (Extract 21, Int. 3).

Linguistically, Gabriela again is highly performative, when presenting her account. The direct quotation of an imperative mood of an authoritative voice (Bakhtin, 1984), reinforced by repetitions with systemic variation (Bauman, 1986) intensifies the almost commanding character of the advice reported by Gabriela. By using her own self-reported direct speech, Gabriela initially demonstrates her acceptance and tolerance. But the closing rhetorical questions, presented with ironic stance, show Gabriela's appeal to the rules of the "game": she points to the contradiction between real life and the principles of equal opportunities, widely declared as the main standards of the employment process position. Gabriela's "investment" strategies are shaped and mediated by her moral and ideological agenda. Her questions address multiple audiences: herself, her immediate interlocutor and, more broadly, the institutional policy makers.

The extract above (21) is an example of an interaction where processes of "dominance and contestation" (Darvin & Norton, 2015, p. 43) are evident. Darvin and Norton (2015) argue that the "sites of control", or "ideological sites", where "power manifests itself materially in the practices of a classroom, workplace, or community; in the positioning of interlocutors" (p. 42), can nevertheless be challenged by an individual's agency, which is part of negotiating one's identity. By being positioned and positioning others, according or refusing them power, individuals are seen as being able to "choose subjects" (Davies & Harre, 1990) and rethink their own position and an internalised "place" and negotiate it.

This process of negotiation of the position, ascribed to her by "others", is visible in Gabriela's next account. The reported power play, expressed in the narratives of potential employers, and Gabriela's first reaction to the situation demonstrates asymmetry of power in the relationships, based on the definition of her being

“international”. However, in the narrative, consecutive to the above, Gabriela constructs arguments in regards to this power play:

And for communication, journalism, marketing – it’s hard to point. English is not being my first language, it’s a bit different. And I understand because like the position was like communication position, and the person said: “Well, you are not going to get it because English is not your first language”. So ... And of course, I have like still uh propositions – they are all in the wrong place, and things are like like the writing – sometimes you make misspelling and things/but like even local are going to make mistakes and/So I don’t know, I’m just trying to be even be more open for positions, like I can apply for more different things and see what’ll happen. Well, who knows? Who knows what’s going to happen? (with a smile) (Extract 22, Int. 3).

In her story world Gabriela seeks to justify why she is not suitable for a position in the communication sector. As with the previous extract (21), she initially takes a tolerant orientation, referring to the recurrent themes of not being competent enough in English and the high level of language required in her profession. She again uses the direct quotation from the Human Resources personnel to reinforce an argument that she is unable to work in this position. She indicates her acceptance of this point of view, listing her perceived weaknesses in English language. However, she simultaneously points to mistakes native English-speakers make, arguably to equate her chances with them. Concluding the story with rhetorical questions, Gabriela leaves this topic of her professional incompatibility open-ended, both to herself and to the wider audience. The structure of the accounts above shows Gabriela’s resistance to be positioned and treated in a way with which she doesn’t agree.

It is also evident from the examples above that Gabriela’s strategy of relying on building contacts does not result in the outcome she seeks for. The above episodes invoke a shift in Gabriela’s strategy to professionally accommodate herself, as she starts to consider other strategies, rather than social networking only, to increase her chances to access a professional environment and to feel “happier”:

I was even considering this the other day: “I think I’m going to be even happier in the Uni, having a PhD, than a job. Because PhD can give me more opportunities in the future or something”. (Extract 23, Int. 3).

The experience of feeling discriminated against on the grounds of her “international” status leads to Gabriela considering undertaking a higher degree to get the employment she wants. Gabriela’s reference to a PhD degree is a statutory statement, making the claim of what she wants to be and the positions she wants to take. The shift in strategies to work on her goals is arguably a move away from the social and cultural assumptions she brought with her (including her perception of Australia as a “less competitive” country) towards the recognition of a system with different rules and a different language. The concept of investment is constituent of agency, which is provoked by Gabriela’s desire to achieve the results of professional employment in conjunction with a balanced social life. Investment is used by Gabriela not just as a strategy to achieve her goals but also as a means to question, resist and negotiate the practices and positions she confronts.

5.3.3 Defining herself and others

5.3.3.1 International versus local

It is argued that one of the main definitional criteria of identity involves ascribing or claiming membership in groups (De Fina & Georgakopoulou, 2012). Interestingly, Gabriela identifies herself with the Australians in the first interview, and she does so based on understanding (of a circulated discourse) that Australia is a country of immigrants. She positions herself as an immigrant among other immigrants:

R: How do you feel here?

G: Well. Here things are very different. As an immigrant in a foreign country (laughs).

R: Do you feel different? From the people who are around?

G: Ah...different from people around...ah...No, I don't think so. (pause) No. I have a friend here, she is from Columbia, the one is from Australia, so one of our neighbours she is from Indonesia (inaudible). Being an immigrant, I think everyone is an immigrant here...Yeah. Everyone is like (pause) the same. So, just depends on how long have you been here for. (Extract 24, Int. 1).

Gabriela further refers to previous generations of Australians, who lived here “for hundred years”, as “immigrants”, the “second generation” of immigrants, thus bringing up to discussion her perception of imaginary discourse of an homogenous Australian society, which is comprised of immigrants who just have lived here for different periods of time. However, in the last interview, it is evident that Gabriela’s perception of herself has shifted from being “a migrant” and “a foreigner” to a global definition of being “an international”, acknowledging her difference from locals and creating margins between new-coming immigrants and local people.

One such boundary is marked by Gabriela in terms of job opportunities and the search for work. The narrative below scales the relationship between being “local” and being “international” with respect to finding employment, partly providing an explanation of the difficulties Gabriela encounters in securing job in Australia:

... What I noticed – for them [local people], it’s kind of easier to get a job and change jobs. Much easier than if you are international. You don’t need the contacts, as well, if you are not from overseas. Like all the groups of contacts, like your college mates, your university ex-colleagues, you just make a few calls and you find some more, find some more, they know jobs, something – we don’t have this. When you are at the place like Australia, you need to kind to prove yourself, and make your way, and ... I still believe that is hard. Or harder for international people than for locals. (Extract 25, Int. 3).

It is evident that Gabriela’s main strategy in gaining employment has been to have a social network, which is directly relevant to the strategies she applies to approach her professional environment. Describing the practices of employment of local residents (arguably – from her experience of how it happens in her home country) through “groups of contacts”, Gabriela now positions herself as a disadvantaged “outsider”, who needs to work hard to create social networks from “scratch” or consider other methods and strategies to achieve her goals. As it follows from the next extract, Gabriela contemplates “pretending” that she is “local” and “normal” in order to gain employment and be socially included, and this decision involves contrasting herself and locals:

... the other day I was like thinking like: “Well, I’m just gonna apply like some normal person” (laughs) – it means like a normal Australian worker or something. Because you have all these little wishes that you have you might not be local ... I already/I already have local experience and ah so the references I’m giving are local because I’ve been here. So, I’m just pretending. I’m pretending I’m a normal local worker and apply for jobs, that’s it (laughs). (Extract 26, Int. 3).

The emphasis on “normality” might signal Gabriela’s willingness to regain a “normal” life over a psychologically and physically turbulent period of migration resettlement. The above extract manifests Gabriela’s uncertainty in her self-identification: she arguably tries to “fill the gap” between the perception of being “international” and different from local people and her perception of the need to perform and act like them to fulfil “all these little wishes that you have”. This duality and disunion are twice marked with laughter, arguably expressing the tension Gabriela experiences in regards to the discussed theme of her sense of identity “mismatching” local standards.

Another distinction drawn from contrasting herself and locals is made by Gabriela with the referencing the modern processes of globalisation and integration:

R: Do you like Australian people?

G: Uuuuh ... Yeah. In general - yeah. But I think some people still need to learn how they can respect themselves, like it means respect the other cultures, like show if they understand what the integration is and everything. Yeah. But they are Ok. (Extract 27, Int. 1).

Criticising “some” local people for being not quite aware of the processes that take place globally, Gabriela indirectly points to her own broader understanding of the modern world, thus advancing her status of being “international” over “local”. Her instructional remark regarding such Australians, who need to learn “to respect themselves” by respecting others is, arguably, self-related: Gabriela implicitly claims that she is not respected here, and she draws her interlocutor’s attention to this point.

5.3.3.2 “White” versus “yellow” and “black”

It emerges that the category of “international” is not homogenous, as it is initially presented by Gabriela. When she raises the theme of race, she presents it as something unexpected and new, as her attention to this issue is drawn by someone else:

G: One thing that's is interesting: I noticed that I'm white in Australia, because someone told me that I was white. In Brazil, it doesn't matter - your colour, you are Brazilian. Here someone told me: “You are white, you are going to find a work, that's OK”. It means, I'm not Asian, I'm not yellow, I'm not black.

R: Does it mean you have more chances?

G: I think they said so. Yeah. And even my friends, they are Asian, they feel themselves like (pause) put down. Not everyone have liked them. I have the Asian friends and they say things that sometimes people don't like them, because they are Asians. So (pause) I don't know. Not so sure. (Extract 28, Int. 1).

In the extract above, Gabriela is positioned as racially opposed and superior to the people with other skin colours, and therefore having a greater chance to accommodate herself professionally and, arguably, be positively accepted socially. Through the use of direct reported speech, Gabriela adds the voices of others (possibly also migrants) and credibility to an argument that she might have advanced on the ground of her “white” skin colour. Saying “I don’t know”, “Not so sure”, she reveals that she feels hesitant towards the issue raised by her friends, and that this is a new social experience she has encountered. Her reference to friends’ experience of passive forms of racial discrimination, arguably reinforces the point of view of her being “privileged”. Reporting on this occasion, Gabriela reflects on her perception of principles and ideologies of the new society in which she is trying to accommodate herself, as well as on her own perceptions and principles.

5.3.3.3 *Active versus passive*

Allocating people into the categories of “international” – “local”, Gabriela acknowledges that neither the issue of her original national identity, nor the sense of belonging to her ethnic community is important to her, and she makes distinctions between herself and others not only on the principle of locality:

R: Do you miss your country?

G: Uhu ... I miss some people, like mother, my sister. Ah ... I like to stay where I grew up, but in general, I'm not that like: “Oh my God, and I cannot live in Costa-Rica or something (inaudible)”. I'm happy to be here, and I came abroad to try to work and make me OK, whatever, yeah, doesn't matter, here or in different place. And I like/I know I can pull, I can do things. People want something – I just do it. (Extract 29, Int. 1).

It is argued that the language work of labelling and categorization is part of the dynamic process of identity construction and a social activity (Bucholtz & Hall, 2005). Gabriela presents herself as a flexible, active, independent, translocal personality, not attached to a particular place or setting, thus marking herself “active” as opposed to “passive” others. In the above example, “People want something - I just do it”, Gabriela positions herself as a “doer”, contrasting herself with people who just passively dream about things. She builds her self-representation through projecting an imagined dialogue of those who are not content with their lives, to create her own sense of easy-going contentment. This is also evident in the following extract, when Gabriela positions herself in relation to both her immediate interlocutor and her friends and relatives, who are not part of the conversation:

R: Do you feel lonely?

G: Uhm ... I learnt to be with myself (pause). Like (little pause) I have my friends and I can call them, if I want to do this. Or I cannot call no one and go to the cinema by myself, would go to be fine. And even if I feel like: “Oh, just wanna go to and have a beer in a pub, by myself”, I do it. And I know, there's people there, so kind of very independent, I think. (pause). Just do it. Don't bother or call someone, whatever. But no, I don't feel lonely. And I think, I'm close with my family, even here, because we have been talking a lot and use Skype, even more than we lived (little pause) like near. Quite interesting. (Extract 30, Int. 1).

The use of self-reported speech and the first singular personal pronoun “I” and “I”-predicates indexes Gabriela’s self-expression and self-presentation (“I said”). It also underlines Gabriela’s self-other distinctions, while emphasising her own role, involvement and accountability, presenting herself as an agentic social actor (De Fina and Georgakopoulou, 2012, p. 169). Gabriela represents herself, using self-reporting speech, highlighting and negotiating personal values and a particular image of herself (in the above case – an independent and active personality). Her representation of agency is also evident in the following example, when Gabriela questions herself about alternative job opportunities:

And it /me/like/I need more energy, things like not put me in a position that I’m low. I’m not low, I’m just well/I should put myself/ I actually have a second language so I can easily speak another language and seek positions: “Uh, maybe I should consider like teaching a Portuguese?” Even do some tutoring or something because of the world/I’m sure there is people they want to go to Brazil and say: “Hello! How are you?” in Portuguese. And things like that ... So, it’s hard to/ because when you arrive here, you arrive in this low/you are like low – but you are not low, you are just a normal person like ... (Extract 31, Int. 3).

Using self-directed questions, and seeking the interviewer’s reaction, she creates an image of a personality who is able to resist negative attitudes or unfavourable circumstances (“not put me in a position that I’m low”) and finds an inspiration in and practical use for her cultural and linguistic capital, which is considered as an advantage. This resilience not to be positioned and accepted in a way that is not desired or preferred by her marks all Gabriela’s narrative accounts. She uses a “yoga” metaphor to literally and figuratively describe her perception of positioning herself and being positioned in the country of her residence:

I think/I noticed that with yoga, yeah, with positions I’m trying/ I’m trying to do different positions, how it works. And I did one very easily, the head stands, put your head on the floor, and just: “Oops!” Very easily, and even I didn’t know that I could do that thing easily. So maybe it’s like this: when you do your application, you are just considering all this like baggage you have: “I’m foreign, I have a visa, English is not my first language”, blah-blah-blah, all these things. Well, you just do an application. If they want –

they want, if they don't want – it's not a big deal. It's not much suffering, just apply next time, and next one and ... I'm trying to leave these things behind. I'm international, not from here, la-la-la. (Extract 32, Int. 3).

In the account above, Gabriela makes parallels between the past, her present reality and her expectations for the future. From her imaginary perspective of the present and her future, she comes to the conclusion that her existing social, cultural and linguistic capital becomes a burden, and should not be taken into account when applying for a job in Australia. Again, in discussing her position, she uses self-reported speech and personal pronouns, presented in a self-directed imperative statement: “just do an application”, “just apply next time, and next one, and ...”, thus accentuating the agentive position that she should take in order to get the desired result.

These examined examples are significant for understanding the relationships Gabriela builds with others in particular places. They are also exemplary of the transformation in Gabriela's identity, driven by her new social experience and leading to reconsideration of social values and principles, with evoked ideological issues such as racial belonging, social inequality and dominant language, and her own position towards these issues. Gabriela's revised system of values and her changing identity is most manifest in the extract below from Interview 3:

Yeah, I think I changed a lot. Changed my perception about some things. Before I was like this: “Oh, my God! I need to work, work, work, work!” And now I say: “Well ... if I was like in Brazil in newspaper, you just work, and you work seven days, you have one day off every fourteen days. And you work ten hours. And I say: “Well, I don't want this more. I want to actually/I'm thirty two now. I'm getting old (laughs). I want/even happy to have whatever job that is going to pay my things and do things”. Of course, I'd like to enjoy it and do something that I like. But also I want to save time to have a life, means doing things that I enjoy like yoga, like read the book, have a tea and do nothing and like save my life, it's not just work, as it was considering before, when I was in my twenties. And now I say: “Life is more than work. And different things.” (Extract 33, Int. 3).

It is evident here that Gabriela's identity work is built on contrasts between “before” and “now”. She performs her story quoting herself and repeating “I say” on many

occasions, thus highlighting the authenticity and authorship of her resolutions, as well as her agency. She uses past and present tense and many details to create more dramatic effect between the previous herself and her previous lifestyle and her current priorities in life, with less orientation to the component of work and more relaxed and balanced attitude towards her lifestyle. However, she again draws attention of her interlocutor to the theme of work, that it should be enjoyable and likable, as also should be other constituents of her present and future life.

5.3.4 Summary

Gabriela's narratives are characteristic of her changing perceptions of her life in Australia and in her home country, and of herself in several domains. These perceptions are reflected in the discussion of themes that emerged from the interviews and are related to her professional field, social relationships, and system of values.

The most important topic raised by Gabriela throughout all three interviews and approached by her from different angles is that of her professional employment. It emerges that her identity work is strongly connected to discussions of her professional status, search for work, education, and social acceptance. The negotiation of her professional skills and their applicability to the new professional settings is the most important question for Gabriela's successful adjustment to the host society. Different stages of the process of this negotiation are noticeable in her narratives, shifting from uncertainty and hesitations to a more positive attitude, more weighted decisions and a more careful choice of strategies to achieve her goals. However, struggling to send a message about her qualifications and level of education, she is "stuck" in performing tasks of a "good" employee at the level of employment, which doesn't correspond with Gabriela's substantive level of education and her professional experience.

Gabriela experiences clashes between personal and professional worlds. What was most important for her in her home country (work, various types of "investment" in education in order to get a more successful professional and financial status)

appeared to be less essential in Australia as she embraced the Australian lifestyle and became more flexible. This re-evaluation took place after Gabriela's reflection on different, sometimes critical, experiences she had in her new country of residence. These reported experiences include: periods of hard work and not having enough food when studying English in Australia; discriminatory treatment of her based on unequal opportunity in the unskilled workforce; the evolved theme of racism and non-respectful attitude towards people from different cultural backgrounds; and "investment" in social and professional networking, which did not result in an anticipated outcome.

These experiences impacted on Gabriela's identity and led to the emergence of new layers, while highlighting its "core", most fundamental features: her desire to agentively resist what she considered unfair or prejudiced, such as being positioned and treated "low", both socially and professionally; and her ability and flexibility to adapt to different circumstances, such as new workplaces, working long hours, doing unskilled jobs, and finding positive sides to what she was doing. Her determination to "invest" in social relationships, learning English and getting additional qualifications makes this strategy one of the most important in the process of Gabriela's adjustment and adaptation to the new cultural and social setting.

She presents her transitional experience, positioning herself as "international", not as an immigrant, using a variety of discourse devices, with performance being one of the most significant features underpinning her self-representation. Multiple cases of self-reported speech are important constituents of her storytelling behaviour, allowing Gabriela to "insert" herself into the story, and functioning as a strong identity marker. Rhetorical questions, often used as a closure of her narrative accounts, serve as a potential mediator between her and her interlocutor's opinions on discussed topics, thus also functioning as a strategy to establish connections with her interlocutor. Repetitions, various evaluative indexicals, constant comparison of opposite terms (like "local"–"international"; "now"–"before") are all distinguishing features of Gabriela's narrative discourse, which mark and manifest her changing identity.

5.4 FLAVIO

Introduction

Flavio is 45 years old, originally from Italy. He was born and educated as an Engineer (building construction)/Project manager in Rome, and his native language is Italian. His work experience includes 10 years of Civil engineering work in Italy, after which he worked for 10 years in the United Arab Emirates (UAE) as a Project Manager. He came to Australia after the downturn in the construction sector in the UAE and the European countries. He has been married for the last 9 years. His wife is an English native-speaker with relatives in Australia. Flavio speaks English at home, and English was also the language of communication at his workplace in the UAE. At the time of the first interview, Flavio had lived in Australia for 1.5 years. He gained employment in his field of expertise shortly after the first interview, and moved from Sydney, NSW, to Melbourne, Victoria, discontinuing his participation in the present study.

The interview, which started as a dialogue of short exchanges, turned into multiple narrations of 230-250 words as topics shifted to discuss themes of particular interest to Flavio. These major themes, emerging from thematic analysis of his interview, include: Flavio's professional and social identification; his social alignment and misalignment with the new settings; and his search for professional and social participation. These themes were discussed in connection with his English language skills, educational and professional credentials, and other personal and impersonal employment circumstances.

According to Flavio, he initially imagined a search for work in Australia would be a seamless transit from his previous employment overseas. However, while looking for suitable employment in Australia for nearly two years, he encountered various difficulties, which threatened his existing sense of professional and social identity. In his narratives, Flavio attempted to "protect" and sustain the identity which he developed and brought with him from his previous workforce, his "transportable" identity (Zimmerman, 1998). This "protective work" was conducted through bringing into the conversation other important voices, such as the voices of previous and potential employers and other immigrants.

In the following analysis of Flavio's case, the concept of "ventriloquation" (Bakhtin, 1984) was used to investigate how he constructed and reconstructed his position in terms of identifying and negotiating the self through the voices of others. Specifically, Flavio's discursive reconstruction of his identity as engineer who was successful in his employment overseas is examined through an exploration of the linguistic devices relevant to the concept of ventriloquation. These discursive devices include the constructs of double voicing (Bakhtin, 1984), contextualising and evaluative indexicals (Silverstein, 2003), and metapragmatic description (Agha, 2007; Wortham, 2001). Double voicing allows articulation of a narrator's own voice through interaction with the voice of another speaker, while indexicals are used to evaluate or reference, or to enact and participate in new events as a form of social action. "Metapragmatic descriptors" are manifest as reported speech events and acts of speaking, framed by verbs of saying (Silverstein 1976, 1993). All these linguistic means are evident indicators of processes of ventriloquation, explained in more detail in Chapter 3 "Theoretical Framework".

5.4.1 Construction and presentation of professional and social identification

5.4.1.1. Identity of an "expatriate" and an engineer

Professional identity and employment are a key focus for Flavio as he renegotiates them in his new environment. He presents himself through his previous professional employment experiences and connects them with his migration and search for a job in Australia:

I worked there [in the UAE] as an expatriate, that's the term used – expatriate, and I worked on a contract basis with ... I started with some Italian companies, engineering companies, some big project. Then I moved to progress my career with the other company in the Middle East, office basing in Dubai and (little pause) basically I stayed there for quite a long time – ten years, yes, ten years. And then I moved [here] ... because of the financial crisis, and the construction sector was pretty badly affected in the UE, and it was a big downturn in the economy, I'm talking particularly of construction. So my wife [sic] said: "Why not to take chance and move to Australia? The situation here is not good at the moment (inaudible), let's move to Australia". So that's why we decided to pack everything and come here, to Sydney. [sic] As soon as I came here I started to apply for my PR [permanent residency], which I got in April this year and from

April till now I'm looking for a job ... yeah ... actively looking for a job ... yeah.
(Extract 1, Int. 1).

In the lengthy narrative account above, Flavio presents a picture of himself as a successful professional with a broad overseas experience. His career path begins in Italy (“some big project”), and shifts to work in the UAE. In his latter context, he references the term “expatriate”, conveying membership of a group of professionals working away from their country of origin who are usually highly educated and often distinguished from unskilled migrant workers. In this case, the indexical term “expatriate” associates Flavio’s experience of being a foreign worker with a recognized social ranking above that of the migrant norm. This indexed claim on social standing is supported with references to his profession and disciplinary field:

... I’m talking about my profession - engineering, which is pretty much a standard, you know, it is quite technical. It’s the same everywhere you go, it’s the same whether you build a house here, in Italy or other country, you know, – conceptually – it’s the same. There may be various standards ... but the concept is the same. It’s a science, it’s exactly the science it’s called. So I don’t have to learn [in Australia] anything more than what I already know. (Extract 2, Int. 1).

Here, the words “profession – engineering” are considered as root, primary indexicals (Silverstein, 2003), associated with the terms “a standard”, “technical”, “science”. The point of using of these indexicals is arguably to transfer Flavio’s professional identification to a different location and time, from the past to the present. Flavio goes on to recontextualise and legitimate the specifics of his engineering profession as “universal”. This positioning is supported by the repetition of indexicals “a standard”, “the same”, upon which Flavio implies the argument that there is nothing more to learn in order to get the job he is seeking. This position is further underlined in a follow-up statement:

My education, my degree and qualification is already matching the Australian standard ... my degree is equivalent to the Australian ... Plus, on top of this I also have certification as a project manager which is quite valuable here in Australia. So, really I don’t need to do any sort of additional qualification. (Extract 3, Int. 1).

The evaluative indexicals, “equivalent”, “matching”, and “valuable”, and their predicate, “the Australian standard”, not only reflect Flavio’s search for social and professional recognition through asserting equivalence and value, but manifest the extent to which these elements are being imagined and projected in the new location. Flavio’s narratives expose the high level of his expectations of being professionally recognised and employed immediately after arrival in Australia. In constructing an argument about his professional and educational credentials, Flavio also refers to his English language skills as an additional component of his professional capability.

5.4.1.2 Language as a factor in building professional confidence and discomfort

Flavio’s continuing narrative builds the implication that he has an appropriate level of professional English by reporting on his experiences of engagement with English as his second language:

... after my degree I did this intensive [English] course in Canada and I was with a family there for three months [sic] ... And (little pause) then, after that my career (pause) I was presented with the opportunity work abroad, in the UA, United Arab Emirates, and so I started studying more and using more my English, which also helped me to find my wife, I guess (giggles), because I'm married, my wife is English - from the country where English is the first language, yeah.[sic] I used to, I mean, I talk English during my daily life and I progressed, improved a lot thanks to conversations with my wife, and, of course, in my profession ... [sic] I was working in English-speaking country, so I used to talk English in my profession (little pause) yeah it was basically the language of understanding, yeah. (Extract 4, Int. 1).

This narrative is Flavio’s statement regarding his perceived high level command of the English language. His listing of various environments, where he applies and practises English language skills, is part of the argument about his competency in his professional field, which, by implication, increases Flavio’s chances in his search for employment:

R: How do you feel about your English?

F: Uh (little pause) now, I would say, I don't have any problem. I speak in English, I think in English (laughs) more than what I used to do it in Italian, yeah (laughs). Initially, of course, it was difficult to learn English because it is quite different from my language (little pause) [sic] but I don't think I have a problem to communicate effectively to anybody, over the phone, face-to-face, in interviews, yeah. (Extract 5, Int. 1).

Flavio makes a joke about thinking in English more than in his native language, reinforcing his confidence. However, he also sees himself of being distinctly different from native-English speaking locals in Australia:

But you see, English/ my English language is quite good. Yes, I told you – I worked in the country where I was speaking English, and in my daily life I also speak English at home with my wife. English is not a problem. I don't think English to be a barrier [to employment]. Because for me, myself, I'm talking about – I don't have Australian accent, of course, I don't speak like Australian (laughs), Aussie style (laughs). But English is not a barrier (little pause) for me. (Extract 6, Int. 1).

Flavio's ironic response to not having an Australian accent and not talking "Aussie style" is marked by laughter, arguably suggesting some linguistic insecurity in his current country of residence. However, he presents this insecurity as a minor matter and continues the theme of his advanced English language skills by referring to previous overseas work experience where he spoke English, but again mentions that sometimes he has difficulties understanding Australian accent:

No, no problem for me - no, because, as I said, I have quite a lot experience, I worked abroad, as I said, I managed to understand people [from] different background, different cultures, different languages, different accents. Yes, it may be some problem to understand an Australian accent, right, but overall, I mean, I make myself understood. (Extract 7, Int. 1).

By repeating "as I said", Flavio supports and reinforces his previous claims, while constructing his arguments in the flow of the interview. This metapragmatic construction in Flavio's discourse functions as a means to sustain his positioning in a particular social order, which arguably resides in his previous experience as a successful foreign worker in the UAE. It emerges that Flavio's use of professional and academic English (Cummins, 1979a, 1979b), developed through his education and professional engagement in English-speaking environments overseas, does not correspond with his basic interpersonal communication skills in Australia, which need to be developed further.

To sum up, Flavio builds an argument for his English language proficiency, linked with his educational and professional experiences, thus again underlining his readiness and competence to be employed in his professional field. However, despite attempts to gain employment, Flavio is unsuccessful. With the process of achieving professional

engagement in Australia becoming an upsetting and concerning issue, he moves to explain the situation.

5.4.1.3 Employment circumstances

While building up an argument about his professional and educational credentials and their correspondence with Australian standards, Flavio draws attention to various difficulties, surrounding the process of gaining employment. He shifts to the theme of work in Australia, in response to questions about his impression of life in the new setting:

R: How do you feel here?

F: O ... life?

R: Yes, in general.

F: It is nice. In terms of job?

R: In any terms.

F: In terms of jobs it's very tough. To say, because, unfortunately, of the downturn in the economy. If you want to say "a recession" - yes, may be, the companies are costing down, cutting jobs, and I found it quite difficult for me to find a break ... This is one reason. Another reason, unfortunately, is they [authorities] don't offer many opportunities for new migrants, I have to say. Yeah. (Extract 8, Int. 1).

Flavio describes his employment circumstances as unfavourable to him, with declining market opportunities and the perceived unsupportive position of authorities towards newly arrived skilled migrants. These external reasons are presented as evidence of restrictions on his ability to gain employment. Flavio returns regularly to the theme of disadvantageous circumstances which limit his opportunities for work and add more obstacles:

I'm saying (little pause). Also this is a very difficult moment - as I say, probably to the recession time, to the moment there are no more opportunities ... In a way, as they [teachers from Skillmax course] say here employers are scared about new migrants, they [employers] mostly rely on ... on word of mouth, you know ... (Extract 9, Int. 1).

In describing practices of Australian employers regarding the hire of skilled migrants, Flavio uses double-voiced commentary ("I'm saying", I say", along with "they say"). Pointing to the lack of responsiveness from potential employers and projecting his confusion with such attitudes, Flavio uses these pronominal forms to mediate the

relationship between his position and the juxtaposed voice. The indexical interplay of “I” and third person pronouns (“they”, “you”) is a notable characteristic of Flavio’s accounts. “They” can represent different groups of people, such as teachers from Skillmax (government funded consultation course for skilled migrants seeking employment), authorities and employers, and is often associated with an adverse stance, while “you”, usually in combination “you know”, is most associated with the quest for agreement. In the narrative above, Flavio tries to manage a sense of perceived indifference from Australian employers towards newly arrived migrants, while seeking an understanding from his immediate interlocutor.

The issue of employment practices is further developed in the following example, where Flavio discusses the way people secure employment through referral and networking:

... Recommendations, you see! It counts a lot in this country if somebody recommends you and says: “Look, I know this person. He is a good engineer, he worked with me”. So they [potential employers] take you more into consideration if somebody is recommending you. So that's why they [people from Skillmax] also told me to use a lot LinkedIn yeah, to update your profile to LinkedIn, to get some network contacts, which is very important, which I'm trying to do. Of course, it's difficult, yeah. (Extract 10, Int. 1).

In taking up the “discourse” identity (Zimmerman, 1998) of an advice recipient (“they told me ... to use ... LinkedIn ... , to update your profile ... , to get some network contacts, which is very important, which I'm trying to do”), Flavio can be seen referring to and appropriating quoted voices, sentiments and social structures in order to tap into networks of power and attribution, notwithstanding his display of awareness of the challenges of doing so (“it’s difficult”). However, in later narratives, Flavio reveals irritation and disagreement with such guidance and the employment practices, also criticising an attitude towards himself on different occasions. This is evident, when Flavio provides an account of difficulties which he encountered in relation to getting accommodation:

... for instance renting a house - I was ready to pay at once for one full year - no, they [landlords] don't give you, because you have to reside in the country, you have to be citizen, you need to have a job, you need to work, no, they don't give you! References from other people! How you can get this? You, you are just new to the country - I mean/ No, it doesn't work like that. Yeah (very quiet). [sic] If

(little pause) if I need a house, the owner cannot ask me pay slip, or resident visa, or reference - I'm new to the country, though/ Where to go? Who to go to, I mean? (laughs) (Extract 11, Int. 1).

Flavio's use of such dramatization devices as details and repetitions in his description of the process of renting a house, mixed with emotional evaluative statements and exclamations with regards to these practices, are manifestations of a distressed state. Being critical of unfair treatment and seeking a sense of recognition ("the owner cannot ask me pay slip, or resident visa, or reference – I'm new to the country"), Flavio closes his narrative with rhetorical questions that seek a sense of direction and support. These serve as an intensification of his sense of disorientation in the new setting, where his expectations and beliefs are shaken, and he is searching for justification. Flavio's statements, questions and depressed laughter show the extent of his disappointment and frustration in terms of a "profoundly intimate emotionality" (Bakhtin, 1986, p. 135).

Flavio further extends his claim of unfair attitudes and challenges during the period of re-settlement, by adding to his account the experiences of other immigrants:

... People, I know, there are people, I know, they are coming for better opportunities in life. Yes, a lot of people have come in previous years and they made a good life, good lifestyle, good (pause) earnings, maybe a good job, good house - I've seen, I know people. But they went through the same problems, even at that time. (Extract 12, Int. 1).

Flavio's ventriloquated reference to others' problems builds his argument drawing on information that originates from the voices of other people. He also integrates the voices of others in order to support and reinforce his sentiments. In the above narratives, the point of consolidation of voices of other migrants is arguably to generalise, to make commonplace the problems which Flavio has encountered, such as difficulties with employment, renting a house, etc., implying that they are common for all new comers. However, he points out that people manage their problems in different ways, and are sometimes forced to change their professional occupations:

I came to know that sometimes migrants have to reassess their experience and qualification to do something else, you know, probably because the market is not more in demand for this particular profession. I hope it's not like that for me ... (Extract 13, Int. 1).

Notwithstanding expressed frustrations and concerns, Flavio maintains that he is positive about staying in his professional field. However, by creatively projecting scenarios of imagined professional engagement, as in the example below, Flavio sends a message that he is seeking a sense of stability in the midst of his unstable state:

I'm not saying that they [employers] just need to offer skilled migrants managerial positions, you know. I'm not talking about that. I'm just talking about simple position to enter the market, study the local regulation, the local market, that's all to be I mean to ... to ... to grow ah ... yourself, also to be an asset for the country. (Extract 14).

Interestingly, that in the narrative above Flavio directly links career development of skilled migrant individuals with the prosperity of the country (“an asset for the country”), which is a statement of his imagined future. He further develops his argument regarding the problem of skilled migrant employment, proposing another pathway to enter the workforce, instantly noting the existing practice, which refutes his suggestion:

F: I think there should be more flexibility, I guess. If for one side the company is asking for ah asking for highly skilled people, not with a lot of experience, at the same time the same company they should open also door for new migrants who already may have lot of experience, maybe not local - so why not to train them, to offer some traineeship?

R: What kind of traineeship?

F: Anything. I mean, just to be - to work uh ... uh ... to work along with somebody else who already in the field just to get a little bit on the course, regulation, the market ... But again they [employers] prefer to hire people with local experience, even in those [lower] positions ... (Extract 15, Int. 1).

Flavio is resourceful in suggesting ideas to resolve the issue with skilled migrant employment, also pointing to the discrepancy between his propositions and existing practices of employment. He criticises the employers for not being “flexible” enough while experiencing labour shortages. By contrast, Flavio reveals the extent to which he is ready to “compromise” his principles of professional engagement in order to achieve his goals:

R: I wonder, if you were offered a position, lower position, would you agree?

F: Yeah. Well ... I'm looking for ... as I said I'm not only looking for a project manager position, I'm also looking for a position, for a lower position, as a

planner, or estimator, or assistant project manager, project engineer, something like that. (Extract 16).

Flavio's consideration of taking a "lower position" manifests that he is ready to adjust his professional identity to reality of new environment. However, while asserting some level of readiness to alter to new settings, Flavio instantly clarifies his statement:

The only thing I have to be trained or just get an exposure to the market to get to know the different standards and goods, applied in this country. So, it doesn't take long, you know – it's just a sort of traineeship you know you reach it could be one month, three months maximum, you know. If you already have an experience in your profession, you easily get you get you progressing your career. (Extract 17).

In the narrative above, Flavio again projects an argument about the credibility of his work experience, asserting that while he needs a short "introduction" to the new environment, he is ready to perform his professional duties at the level he used to execute previously. That also points to his desire to regain the social status of a highly educated professional. At the same time, Flavio's narratives display high levels of instability in his self-presentation and his sense of agency. This is evident in his accounts about employment circumstances and other situations encountered during the period of resettlement, which are presented as common for all new comers and are beyond their control. Flavio expresses his disagreement with the order of things in various contexts, from employment practices to the process of renting a house, by using "I" and "you" as opposed to "they", as well as using evaluative indexicals and rhetorical questions, when presenting his position of being skilful and "flexible".

Conversely, it emerges that Flavio's perception of his capabilities does not coincide with perceived practices of employment in Australia, as he discusses this disparity in terms of his personal circumstances. Shifting from an argument about general difficulties with employment in Australia, based on the current economic situation and his perceived attitude of the local authorities and employers towards immigrants, Flavio moves to review his personal situation:

... sometimes they [potential employers] tell me that I overqualified you say for Australia... I got qualification – my engineering degrees, PM [project management] certification ... Sometimes I overqualified, sometimes I (pause) Ok

they don't tell me business ... other times, many, many times they tell me I don't have local experience, which is quite tricky for me because I have more than fifteen years of international experience and quite capable of working anywhere – I mean, in my profession, I know my profession quite well... (Extract 20, Int. 1).

In using the metapragmatic descriptors – “they tell me I overqualified”, “you say” and “they tell me I don't have local experience” – Flavio provides an interpretive process of how his circumstances should be understood, juxtaposing the voices of “they” and “you say” with the “I” of his own “I got my qualifications” and “I have more than fifteen years of international experience”. In doing so, he shifts between current conditions and previous experiences in regard to his degrees, qualifications, and work experience. Juxtaposing the requirement for “local experience” with “international experience”, he constructs an appeal for justification and parity between old and new worlds. The utterance “Ok, they don't tell me business” is an emphatic reading of perceived untrustworthy voices of potential employers. This perception is also evident in the ventriloquated expression:

... they had at the end they [potential employers] told me [during an interview]: “We don't have a project, we don't have a business, we cannot employ you at the moment, may be next year”, do you believe? (Extract 21, Int. 1).

The use of “they” in Flavio's narratives regularly precedes an intense affective response and loss of a sense of personal agency. Flavio's sense of personal agency is under constant threat, as is evident not only in multiple cases of constructed opposition between “I” and “they”, but also in the recurrence of the particular themes and appeals throughout his accounts.

To sum up, Flavio's professional and social identification is emerged as strongly attached to his previous professional and social life, as he presents himself as a skilled professional with a good command of English (though claiming some uncertainty in not having a local accent and thus feeling different from the locals). His identity of a successful “expatriate”, which he constructed overseas and attempted to reconstruct in Australia, has however undergone changes due to the different perception of him by the representatives of the host society. Flavio keeps listing various external factors, which prevent him from gaining employment in his field of expertise, demonstrating the loss of his agency and the changes

in his positioning in the new settings. The discussion of various social issues also reflects the shift in his self-perception, as is evidenced in the next section.

5.4.2 Framing of social alignment and misalignment

5.4.2.1 “Taking on” various social positions - presenting multiple voices

Refraining and developing his previous statements about “scared” employers and unsupportive practices from authorities, Flavio expresses his unfavourable attitude towards the employers who provide limited opportunities for immigrants:

You know, that’s really ... (with a grimace) very bad thing to say about Australia, because let’s not forget that Australia is a land of migrants, so, as such, they [authorities/employers] should be giving more opportunities to people coming ... Whether because they [employers] don’t know them, so they are scared, they don’t know which part of the world they are coming from, what qualification they have, you know ... Which I understand in a way, I understand in a way, but ... (Extract 22, Int. 1).

This ventriloquated account (talking from the employers’ perspective) makes transparent the seeming contradiction between the policy of inviting skilled migrants to live and work in Australia, and the ambivalent responses of potential employers, which for Flavio casts an adverse light: “that’s really ... very bad thing to say about Australia”. It is the organisation of this text with its verbs of saying and adjectival phrases which produces an effect of bewilderment.

The recurrent theme of Australian employers who are “scared” of new migrants, is followed by the persuasive assertion “let’s not forget that Australia is a land of migrants”, defining his status as one of them. This argument expressed in the metapragmatic construction “let’s not forget” is used by Flavio to construct his “right” as a fellow Australian migrant to remind a wider Australia of the potential hypocrisy of the position taken with respect to the treatment of newcomers.

In an effort to align with these contrary conditions, Flavio twice expresses his position: “I understand, I understand”. Seeming to align himself with the position taken by

Australian employers, he concludes with a qualifying “but”, signalling that these matters remain unresolved. This extract provides an example of an identity in transition, in which Flavio participates both as a foreigner and an Australian: an outsider-insider. It is an example of appropriating multiple, sometimes contradictory voices, and thus speaking from several positions almost simultaneously. Positioning himself as a foreigner, a migrant, an Australian, an employer, and an employee Flavio animates a range of contexts, using ventriloquation to bring different contexts and worlds into existence mediated by differing social relations. The narrative construction points to the issue of managing the expectations and practices of seemingly interconnected social worlds, in a newly experienced environment.

Flavio returns to the argument of morally contradictory immigration policies that manifest as a gap between policies and practices that hinder a timely integration for immigrants:

... They [the authorities] want more people to come here, too, because of the low population – it is a big country, potentially – a lot opportunities ... (Extract 23, Int. 1).

You see, I mean, the visa process, at the end of the day, it shouldn't be just as a matter of business - you know, you pay the fee, they give you a visa. No, it doesn't finish there, that's only the starting point, there is a lot of things to be done, you know. [sic] Then, I mean, anybody can integrate to the community, to the society and start working, start there being independent, of course. (Extract 24, Int. 1).

“They”, followed by critique, evidences the experiential struggle of constituting the self in the midst of perceived “oppositions”. The use of “you know” twice in this short account (24), intensifies the theme and Flavio’s position in relation to it. The effect of juxtaposing “they” with challenging circumstances draws the “audience” into the same affective zone. Holmes (1986) argues that “you know” often functions as reassurance in the context of recounting critical or embarrassing experiences (p. 16). In using the generalised form “you know”, Flavio does not directly seek the perspective of the message recipient but rather aims to establish epistemological and social understanding with his interlocutor while feeling dispossessed of social and professional power.

Presenting multiple positions and voices, and employing various metapragmatic descriptors, Flavio regulates and mediates processes of social adjustment in his present state. He uses pronominal forms “they” and “you” to construct socially interactive dual-voiced discourse through their appeal to presupposition and assumption. That the majority of metapragmatic verbs are in effect neutral (e.g. say, tell) suggest that Flavio is positioning his discourse within what might be characterised as mainstream discourse arguably typical of his position. The presentation of his positioning and its shifts are further discussed below.

5.4.2.2 Shift in social positioning

The work of Flavio’s social and professional positioning is also evident in his references to circulating discourses about Australia as a classic country of immigration. The discourse is one where skilled migrants are welcomed because they bring resources to address economic issues (discussed in Walsh, 2014), but no resources have been offered to them:

... What I find strange here, in Australia, actually, uh because it's a land of migrants, again, there should be been offered more opportunities, you know. If you want more people come here, if you grant them visa, visa on the qualification, assessed qualification by the government, they should be at the same time offered also some other opportunities, you know, to start your life, your career. (Extract 25, Int. 1).

Flavio re-voices this discourse on multiple occasions, re-stating his perception of Australia as a “land of migrants and indirectly including himself into the group of immigrants:

... at the end of the day we are all migrants ...

... we are all migrants ... (Extracts 26- 27, Int. 1).

This recurrent revoicing of circulated discourses is an example of ventriloquation serving Flavio’s process of social adjustment in the context of seeking to identify with and participate in Australian society. However, while projecting his alignment with Australia as a migrant society, he expresses uncertainty at the extent of his inclusion:

... I still don't feel quite (little pause) tuned with the Australian life in a sense I don't have job ... But (little pause) the general feeling is (little pause) if that is this problem will be sorted out in the near future, I mean, I will be getting a job offer - fingers crossed - I probably can get ... I can live a life, my life, with my family here ... to be part of the Australian society. I feel so, yeah ... (Extract 28, Int. 1).

Here in the midst of this uncertainty Flavio's social and professional membership categories shift implicitly from "expatriate" to "migrant", directly connecting Flavio's sense of social inclusiveness with his professional employment. As is evident throughout Flavio's accounts, he makes strong links between professional identity, social inclusion, and situated participation. The voices of various groups – overseas employers, expatriate professionals, authorities, and migrants are invoked and juxtaposed in order to sustain those links and presuppositions regarding the world of transnational professional employment and migrant social participation.

Flavio's argument of the transportability of his professional abilities and social standing to the new environment is built on the recurrent reference to Australia being a "land of migrants", pointing to the perceived equal immigrant status of all Australian residents and positioning himself amongst them. It emerges, however, that he perceives himself as neither being treated equally by the potential employers, nor being welcomed by the authorities. His anticipated seamless professional and social transition from the previous country of residence into the new settings becomes a challenging process, and he seeks to juxtapose his expectations with his present position, attempting to sustain his sense of self, both professional and social.

5.4.3 Search for professional and social participation: uncertainty in discussing professional future

Presenting a largely optimistic stance with regards to his career prospects, Flavio directly links his imaginary future with the economic development of Australia, rewording his previous claims:

Potentially, as I said, this is the country (little pause) has to grow, there will be investments, there have to be investments in the structures, in the buildings. Potentially, I see myself in the same field, in the same area. So, I would like to progress in my career and (little pause) and yeah (little pause) as I said, I came here for a permanent - with the idea to be permanent, to buy a house, to, to, to make Australia my, my country, yeah, my country (in a very quiet voice). That's the idea. (Extract 29, Int. 1).

The account is dramatised through drawing attention to the significance of his intentions for migrating, and personalising his case by sharing the details of his plans for the future and his determination to settle (“... to be permanent”, “to buy a house”, “to make Australia my country”). By using “as I said” twice, Flavio’s argument is reinforced, adding validity to previous accounts and building new accounts in line with his previous words, thus creating a continuity of this argument.

Nevertheless, at the end of the account, Flavio returns to expressions of uncertainty about his future:

F: [sic] As I said, I'm still positive and (little pause), but, you know, I didn't say to my wife - I don't know if she wants it, but if I can't find anything I will probably look abroad (little pause) for a job.

R: Abroad?

F: Abroad. To go to other places. If this country will not able to provide ... yeah ... to provide me with proper job - yeah, yeah ... This is not (little pause) in the plan, let's say just the idea.

R: You haven't discussed it yet with her?

F: No, no. Because it's not the plan, just the idea, but eventually, I mean, I don't have a job for one year, I'm using my own money, I'm running out of it (chuckles) long. And I'm not willing to do any work, which is not related to my area, to my experience, and which is also low level - I mean, I want to do, I want to work in a lower position, but in my area, allowing for me to progress to reach the position I had before. I agree with that, I'm willing to do that [I] agree with that, I'm not to do something else, I'm not to do (pause) I'm not to ... I mean, with my degree, qualification and experience I can get the job (little pause) if not here - in some other country. I'll find out, I'll try. (Extract 30, Int. 1).

Flavio’s account is characteristic of the display of divisive feelings he experiences. On one hand, he tries to maintain the sense of being optimistic towards professional prospects in Australia but this sense contradicts his perceptions of being deceived in his

expectations (“this country will not able to provide ... yeah ... to provide me with proper job - yeah, yeah ...”). Flavio raises the theme of his professional credentials and experience, arguing that if they are not acknowledged in Australia, they can be recognised and accepted somewhere else, thus expressing his frustration and distress with the situation in which he finds himself. The narrative above sends a signal that Flavio is strongly reluctant to compromise his principles, and his perceptions of his social and professional status remain unchanged.

Flavio’s openness in sharing his thoughts is indicative of his high level of sensitivity to not being professionally credited for his career achievements. In order to support and sustain his threatened sense of professional identification, Flavio refers to voices from the past to animate the context of his previous employment in Dubai:

So, as I said, I'm already one year now without a job. Next year I will wait for another four-five-six months probably. [sic] Really, I cannot be without a job for so long. Then I will see, I'll decide. Maybe my wife will remain here and I'll move to. You know, I was working in Dubai, my previous boss asked - called me back, actually (laughs): “Flavio, whenever you want to come - your position is open to you now, with our business”. I said: “Look, I moved to Australia, to, to - on a permanent basis, so I want to make it happen, to be settled down definitely. But if things are not going to work favourable for me, I will eventually - to come back”. I hope not. I mean that's just the idea. Let's see. I'll try. As I said today, I did second interview. Now I hope something will become concrete and they will offer me something, maybe I don't need to leave (laughs). (Extract 31, Int. 1).

In this extract Flavio employs a status adjustment marker – “[my previous boss]... called me back, actually”, to demonstrate that he is highly valued as a professional. By quoting his boss and himself, he brings a previous identity into the present to re-create the image of himself as a valuable and respected specialist, thus contradicting his current status of an unemployed specialist in Australia who has been struggling to secure a job in his field of expertise. His discussion of a hypothetical idea to move to the place where he is positioned as a respected professional, presented alongside the hopeful expectations of securing job in Australia is concluded with laughter, arguably manifesting Flavio’s confusion about his current professional standing and uncertainty in the future. His use of double-voicing and revoicing is a means to temporally relocate himself, bringing the past into the present, the outside into the inner self, to manage and reinforce his professional status and sense of conviction to the course of action he is pursuing.

5.4.4 Summary

The interview with Flavio reveals the importance for him of maintaining his sense of professional identification and desire for unhindered successful professional and social accommodation in Australia. He arrived in his new country of residence as an accomplished professional in his field, bringing a residual identity, constructed during his previous professional and social experience as an expatriate in the UAE. In order to sustain the sense of his professional and social identification, he attempts to transport his expatriate identity to the new settings by importing the voices of others into his arguments.

Voicing different groups of people, both from past and present sites, Flavio seeks to establish parity between the past and present, maintaining an argument of the transportability of his professional abilities and social standing in the new environment. He directly connects his social inclusion with professional engagement, while indicating that his self-perception has shifted from being an “expatriate” to the position of a “migrant” in Australia. Though he recurrently refers to the circulating discourse of Australia being a “land of migrants”, his identification as a migrant emerges as an ambiguous issue. In accordance with his belief that all non-indigenous Australians are immigrants Flavio does not identify himself as a “newcomer”, but ascribes his belonging more inclusively to the overall “migrant” population of Australia.

Despite Flavio’s attempts to identify himself as one of all other Australians, there is evidence of a tension between this self-perception and the way he believes he is perceived by others. This tension is illustrated in Flavio’s claiming proficiency in English but noting the differences he recognises in relation to Australian English. His awareness of not speaking with an “Aussie” accent and a claim about difficulties with understanding such an accent manifest his sense of “otherness” in the local settings. His emotional descriptions of the ways he is treated by various groups of people such as authorities, landlords, and employers exemplify the conflict between Flavio’s desire to maintain his senses of identity and his perceptions of reality, also demonstrating the changes in his sense of social identity due to his encounters with representatives of the host society.

Flavio's initial expectations to be recognised for his overseas professional achievements do not find confirmation from local employers. Discursively, Flavio positions himself as a well-educated and experienced engineer, arguing that due to the "universal" nature of his occupation his professional skills can be applied everywhere. However, his positioning contradicts the reality of being an unsuccessful job applicant, framed by the displeasing voices of potential employers. Flavio's efforts to juxtapose these voices with his sense of self are indicative of complex processes, which affect his professional and social identity and lead to reconsidering the strategies of securing employment in Australia.

After becoming aware of other migrants' troubled experiences, and encountering multiple difficulties during the process of resettlement and seeking employment, Flavio shifts in the presentation of his identity and his perceptions of the future. He acknowledges that even though he is adequately equipped with knowledge and skills to fulfil the requirements of the local professional job market, he needs to get exposed to it first from a "lower position". This claim reveals his agreement to temporarily adjust his sense of professional identity. Nevertheless, when this adjustment does not lead to the desired employment, Flavio considers seeking employment overseas, showing that he is reluctant to undertake any further changes to his sense of professional self-identification.

Overall, Flavio's discourse is characterised by strong connections to his previous life and self-identifications based on previous career achievements. Linguistically, his argument is built on quoting and referring to the words of other interlocutors. His use of ventriloquation links everyday voices and material things of past and present worlds as a lived reality. It mediates between outsider and insider views and discourses circulating about Australia and the place of migrants in Australian society while gathering and providing support for a view of himself as a valued individual in the face of new challenges and oppositions. The related elements of double voicing, contextualising and evaluative indexicals, and metapragmatic descriptions, are discursive contributors to Flavio's process of resettlement, relating his sense of self to the new environment and setting a direction for his discourse and its interpretation while enacting virtual and real forms of social participation.

5.5 ALMAFUERTA

Introduction

Almafuerta is 40 years old, and she was born and educated in Buenos-Aires, Argentina. She holds a Master's Degree in Arts (Journalism). Her native language is Spanish. In Argentina, she worked as a journalist. In her thirties she moved to New Zealand and lived there for 2 years, doing casual work. Due to family circumstances, she returned to Argentina for several years but then migrated to Australia and received a PhD scholarship from an Australian University. While studying, Almafuerta worked as a casual university lecturer. She is married to a New Zealander (a fuller profile is provided in Chapter 4 "Methodology").

The three interviews with Almafuerta are characterised by shifts from dialogue to the monological speech of the interviewee, signalling the importance of the discussed topics for her. Some of these shifts in the interviews were initiated by the researcher's questions, while some of them were introduced by the interviewee, pointing to the co-constructed nature of the interviews.

There are several recurrent interrelated themes evident in all three interviews: her education, social relations, sense of belonging. The theme of her education includes discussion of qualifications, educational credentials, and questions of overall erudition. It is often presented with multiple references to different geographic locations, where Almafuerta lived, studied, or worked, or which she simply knew. These continuously repeated geographic references, linked to Almafuerta's levels of education and the scope of her interests, are used to create her desired identity.

The theme of education is also presented in connections to the theme of social relations, including class, gender, and work relationships in academia. These subthemes are marked as sensitive issues for Almafuerta, grounded in the system of her ethnic cultural and social values, and emerge as important points for her perception and interpretation of aspects of reality and her identity negotiation. In addition, the subtheme of community membership reflects Almafuerta's strong ties with the community of her native country, which is an influential element in her self-presentation and identification.

The process of Almafuerta's identification is also reflected in the discourse about her PhD study in Australia. The theme of her doctoral degree and the discussion of the process of obtaining it emerges as one of the most significant factors, impacting on her self-definition and functioning for her as a social adaptation strategy.

A characteristic feature of Almafuerta's discourse is that across all the themes (various levels of education and social relations and values) she constantly switches from the present to other times and locations, thus bringing into the conversation "both spatial and temporal aspects" (Bakhtin, 1986, p. 134) of the topic at hand. Consistently "chronotopic", Almafuerta's point of view provides for an examination of the relationship between the themes indexed in her discourse using Bakhtin's (1981, 1984, 1986) notion of chronotope. The following discussion presents the identified themes in their interrelatedness with each other and examines the ways that the time-space construct is used by Almafuerta to re-contextualise available resources to negotiate her identity in new settings.

5.5.1 Identity construction through the theme of education in connection with geographic references

5.5.1.1 Ability to "multiply" herself using time-space scales

Almafuerta's multiple and continually repeated geographic references point to her various levels of education undertaken in various countries and their significance to her. This process of "educational travelling", both physical and virtual, manifests itself from the beginning of the first interview, when Almafuerta is asked to introduce herself:

My profession back in Argentina ... [pause] I was journalist, now I'm full-time PhD student at University of New South Wales ... [pause] I moved recently from Sydney to Melbourne ... [pause] I was born in Buenos Aires, Argentina, where I studied my undergraduate degree at the University of Buenos Aires, then my Master in journalism at the University of Saint Andreas ... [pause] To do my Master I got a scholarship, to do my PhD in Australia I got a scholarship, as well, an APA, Australian Postgraduate Award ... [pause] I travelled to United States to do an English course, and then I lived in New Zealand for two years and I worked there ... I decided to go to New Zealand in my thirties, when I was thirty. My

original plan was to come here to do a PhD (laughs) (Excerpt 1, Int. 1, Paragraph 1).

In the above extract, Almafuerta constructs the narrative about her qualifications and educational credentials as a chronicled account of her movements in space and time. Her travelling across time is marked by simultaneous references to multiple international destinations (Argentina, Australia, United States, New Zealand), as well as local (New South Wales, Sydney, Melbourne). Thus, Almafuerta's space-time discourse, situated in various educational contexts, manifests her accumulated educational identity, projected in the new environment, in which she is positioned as a PhD student.

Almafuerta travels across various spatio-temporal frames – scales, which are considered to be “an instrument by means of which subjects bring order in their semiotizations of the social and material world” (Blommaert, Westinen & Leppanen, 2015, p. 121). Using available contexts and temporal and spatial indexes, Almafuerta moves to organise her new world, re-evaluating and reconfiguring her life and previous experience. This is evident in the following example, where Almafuerta refers to various geographic locations, this time to describe her changing perception of the world – and herself - since her arrival in Australia:

... Uh, my vision of the world has changed [since the arrival to Australia]. I was very ignorant about Asia. About a lot of countries I haven't heard or read anything, I haven't heard anything in the news about Burma, Vietnam, Thailand, Indonesia, Bangladesh, Sri Lanka, never heard about most of the countries and now I read about those countries all the time. Or Africa, you know, - Kenya, Congo, Zimbabwe. So now I watch Al Jazeera, and I learn about the changes, their experiences. Middle East, a lot of information about Syria, and Bahrein, and I thought it was a country called “By rain”. So I realised how ignorant I was, how narrow the information I received in my country was. Because all I could read in the newspapers were United States, some parts of Europe, maybe Spain, maybe UK, Brazil, ah that's it. (Excerpt 2, Int. 2).

In this extract, Almafuerta's new vision of the world, acquired in her new residence, mediates the process of re-evaluation of her previous social experiences and thus impacts on her identity. By claiming being previously “ignorant” and narrowly informed, and expansively moving across spatial scales, Almafuerta positions herself translocally, and presents a desired image of a well-informed person, concerned with geo-political and geo-global issues.

The extracts given above are examples of identity work as geo-relational, as well as time-relational as Almafuerta employs geographic references and shifts between “now” and before (“in my country”) to discuss her changing perception of the world and herself. Almafuerta’s identity work is conducted in relation to her previous location and state of mind, as compared to her new location and new state of mind. Taylor (2007) points out that references to place allow speakers to construct continuity between past, present and future, even when their life circumstances and experiences do not obviously correspond to the term of continuity, as is often the case with adult immigrants. While time and space are actually represented in Almafuerta’s narratives and indeed function as the resources to create continuity between her past, present and future, their main purpose is to enable and negotiate particular kinds of Almafuerta’s identity through her actions, meanings and values.

Wyse, Nikolajeva, Charlton, Cliff Hodges, Pointon and Taylor (2012) argue that a sense of place “is a process, [sic] it is a site of multiple identities and histories ... Reflection on all places can offer insight into the individual power-geometries through which particular places are constructed” (p. 1012). Almafuerta brings a sense of various places, which are the sites of her educational identities and histories, into the construction of a new layer of her identity in the new place she currently inhabits.

It emerges that Almafuerta carefully chooses the experiences which she brings up to negotiate her sense of identity in new settings. Being an accomplished professional, Almafuerta only briefly mentions her extensive previous work experience in Argentina without going into much detail (“My profession back in Argentina I was a journalist”, “I worked in a marketing company ... and then I worked in a human research company ... and then I worked in a foreign trade company”, Int. 1). Conversely, repeatedly referring to her educational experiences in terms of completed or being completed degrees, Almafuerta indexes her status as a high achieving student, both in Argentina and in Australia (“To do my Masters I got a scholarship, to do my PhD in Australia I got a scholarship, as well, an APA, Australian Postgraduate Award ...”). This might be indicative of Almafuerta’s reluctance to co-construct her new identity based on her existing layered professional identity, as in Australia, she shifted her professional field of

journalism to the field of criminology and media (her PhD study is about media representation of criminology). It emerges that Almafuerta prefers to build her identity in Australia positioning herself as a successful student awarded an Australian Postgraduate Scholarship and who received scholarships previously, rather than drawing on her identity as a journalist.

Using continuous chronotopic references to the events in her biography – “invokable chunks of history” (Blommaert, 2015, p. 1) – Almafuerta activates various educational contexts, both formal and informal, local and international, to present her previous experiences – and her previous identities – in terms of how-it-was and to connect it to the here-and-now. In Bakhtin’s words, her past is “creatively operative in the present” affecting and “determining” it, and, perhaps, “to a certain degree, predetermining the future” (1986, p. 53). Almafuerta’s construction and negotiation of aspects of her identity in various educational contexts marks the educational environment as the most significant scene for the presentation of herself and discussion of her professional future.

5.5.1.2 New educational environment: a necessity to adjust professional identity and acquire new communicative resources

Almafuerta’s perception of her weakness in second language led to a change of professional direction:

... I realised/I realised when I worked [in unskilled job] that if I want a skilled job in Australia I wouldn’t be able to do a media job. (pause) Because you have to have native, ah, level of English and at that time I didn’t have it. And also you have to be able to work with metaphor and if you don’t have master (pause) either master the language at native level you won’t be able to work with metaphors. So, there was certainties in the language that I wasn’t able to do to perform a media job (Excerpt 3, Int. 2).

A: I realised I didn’t have what it takes, in terms of language. And even though my English was good, it was not good enough to work in the media.

R: So, it was your own perception or you got responses

A: No, it was my own perception and the fact that it was very hard just to do a simple task like write an article in English. And they modified me/ the article several times.

(Excerpt 4, Int. 2).

An inadequate knowledge of English is presented by Almafuerta as the major argument for the modification of her professional direction. An understanding of the necessity to adjust and adapt to the new settings, in order to fit in these settings, forces Almafuerta to make an investment (Norton, 2000) not just in language, for example in an “academic” level of English (Cummins, 1979a, 1979b), where she completed several language courses for writing, but more significantly, to align herself with the new settings. Her decision to get a PhD from an Australian university is her chosen pathway to the Australian workforce and to discovering and acquiring a system of new social values, communicative practices and resources, both cultural and linguistic.

Almafuerta’s description of the communicative style required for successful communication with her university supervisors reveals the difference between the norms of communication in her home country and in her new environment:

You know, for example, I found, especially in academia, you don’t make direct questions. For example, I realised that you can’t say to your supervisor: “Oh, can we meet tomorrow at 10 am?” You won’t get an answer because it’s too direct or rude. You will say: “I will appreciate if we may/or if we can/if we could meet tomorrow at some/or what would be preferable for you, or would be convenient” ah - the whole/just to ask for one thing you have to think, you know, how to say, you know, in indirect way because every time I have to write them to make a request to anyone, I have to think how can I say it without saying it...(laughing) (Excerpt 5, Int.1).

In order to get responses from her supervisors in Australia, Almafuerta had to re-evaluate the use of her linguistic resources and strategies and accept an “indirect” way of communication, whereas in her home country she would use direct questions. Although engaging in this activity of accepting the perceived norms of communication in Australian academia in order to affiliate with a social grouping, Almafuerta nevertheless has difficulties in accepting these norms as her own. Instead, she is being ironic pointing to the ceremonial character of such communicative style, intended, from her point of view, “just to keep the social harmony”.

Bakhtin (1986) considered irony “as a form of silence” (p. 134). Almafuerta’s strategies in expressing her ironic stance towards academic practices in Australia include imagined

direct reported (self-reported) speech, and multiple verbs with modals. To re-enforce her ironic opinion, Almafueria uses another non-verbal speech marker – laughter. In her closing statement “I have to think how can I say it without saying it”, accompanied by laughter, Almafueria indirectly criticises what seems to her unnecessary or preposterous, and contradicts her perception (based on her identity as Argentinian with a particular cultural and social capital) of how the things should be done.

Almafueria’s attitude towards practices of behaviour at some universities is traced in further accounts of her social life in Australian academia:

A: They [academics] are like actors, you know that the actresses and actors – they like to be praised, like to be: HUUUUUUUH! (Applauds). It’s like that. You have to play that – and you are in ... Those people tend to monologue. About themselves (laughs) ... They love when you praise them. They love to be [makes kissing sound].

R: Isn’t that in human nature to love to be praised?

A: Yes, but that’s excessive. Excessive. (laughs) (Excerpt 6, Int. 2).

Almafueria acts out (“performs”, after Bauman and Briggs, 1990) the relationships of the academic world: “HUUUUUUUH!”, applauding, making kissing sounds. She takes an ironic and even sarcastic stance and uses a lot of evaluative references (“anti-social”; “actors”; non-verbal applauding; “monologue about themselves”), repeating some of them several times to express her strong disapproval of these practices. Her laughter on this occasion is “[p]urely negative, satirical laughter” (Bakhtin, 1986, p. 135). She creates boundaries between herself and “them”, and “they” are described as others. Her ironic take on it is also an indication of this.

The above examples reflect a process of Almafueria’s accumulation of social and cultural capital, when new patterns of communications, such as communicative style and academic social practices are pragmatically integrated into her repertoire of social and linguistic resources. However, Almafueria’s attitude towards these required structures of communication in the new environment reveals that she is resisting to undermine her Argentine identity and established in her home society norms and rules of behaviour. This attachment to cultural and social values of the country of her origin is manifest further in Almafueria’s discussion of her relationship with representatives of her ethnic community

in Australia and overseas, in the countries of Latin America, which emerge as a strong theme in her accounts.

5.5.2 Cultural and social values and experiences as the corner stones of a sense of identity

5.5.2.1 Sense of ethnic community membership

It is evidenced in Almafuerta's multiple references that it is important for her to maintain and support the sense of belonging to her ethnic community based on shared understanding of the values and principles of the people who have similar social and cultural background:

... people of Latin America suffer a lot (laughs) so, and usually, every time we were talking about something that happened here, you know, when you get used to things working very well and then you compare to something else, and then always/until remember where you come from. Just be aware like I don't know things are really worse at home, you shouldn't complain ... Well, I can't say the same about Spain. Because things are OK, they are not good at Spain but they are not as bad as in Latin America (Excerpt 7, Int. 1).

De Fina (2000, 2006) points to ethnicity as a central category for the ascription of identity for Mexican and other Latin American immigrants in the US. Almafuerta creates her membership categorisation with Spanish-speaking middle-class Latin Americans in terms of shared social, rather than cultural, values, thus excluding people from Spain or English-language speakers as not matching these requirements. This is evident in several extracts presented below:

I prefer persons from Latin America, not from Spain. Because the reality is different. Like a person from Spain has European lifestyle. And they have no idea how it is to live and work in Latin America (Excerpt 8, Int. 1).

... there is a sense of familiarity that I don't have with an English speaker ... Ah ... the jokes, the sense of humour, we share that even if it's not from my country. Like Venezuela has a similar sense of humour of me, of Argentine, and we see the/we see life very similar ... we share that we are angry with corruption that we can't get ahead for our merits, honour merits, that we have to know someone, get

someone, to get some places so (pause) there is a lot of ah practices, social practices ... (Excerpt 9, Int. 1).

Almafuerta builds boundaries between the members of “her” ethnic community and “others”. By establishing binary categories, she creates relationships with other social groups, identified as antagonists and opposers, and this identification is “one of the elements in the construction of identity in terms of broader social categories”, according to Bastos and Oliveira (2006, p. 198). Bamberg (2016) argues that integrating or differentiating a sense of who we are in relation to others is one of the ways to accomplish identity-relational work in narratives. In the above extracts present tense and the use of collective pronoun “we” might be indicative of Almafuerta’s sense of belonging to her ethnic community at the moment of talking. However, these examples are also manifest of her perception of continued membership in this community, arguably differentiating her from other representatives of Australian society.

It is characteristic of all Almafuerta’s accounts that she identifies herself with people from her ethnic background in terms of the hardships of life and the ability to cope with those, which she presents as typical and widespread in Latin America. Terms such as “corruption”, “chauvinisms”, and “inequality” become significant in building identity through association and differentiation (Wenger, 1998). This association with these particular ideological values is exemplified in the following segment where Almafuerta explains her pseudonym that she chose for the study:

R: OK. I’d like to ask you about the nickname you’ve chosen for yourself

A: (laughs)

R: when I suggested you should choose one. Almafuerta, am I right?

A: Yes. “Alma” is soul

R: Uhu

A: “Fuerte” is strong.

R: Yeah.

A: So, it’s a composed word, which means “strong soul”.

R: Yeah, that’s great! Does this name characterise you in some way?

A: Yes, because there is a writer, an Argentine writer, whose nickname was Almafuerte. Uh, he was a very tortured writer, he had a very difficult life, really miserable. All sorts of tragedies in his life. And still he was able to write. So, every time I think: “I’m done!” (laughs) I/I/I read some of his poetry. Because one of his famous sentences or poetry in Argentina is about the persons who are really down and they think they/they are completely shuttered, they have nothing to offer uh he said: “You don’t have to give up even when you think you are done”. So, it’s just that thing that keeps me go (Excerpt 10, Int. 2).

Silverstein (2003) argues that “... cultural values ... in micro-contextual interaction are notoriously ‘ideological’, that is, they emerge in the micro-contextual dialectic as essentializations ... of evaluational stances (good/ bad; preferred/dispreferred; normal/deviant; etc.) underlying social partitioning ...” (p. 202). Almafueria’s system of social and cultural values is expressed with a variety of evaluative stances. For example, she closely associates herself with an Argentinian author whose life was “very difficult”, “really miserable”, but inspirational, thus implying that she is a person who remains strong in spite of adversities. Further, when referring to lives of people in Latin America, her narratives often contain negative connotations and evaluations, such as “things are bad”, “lots of suffering”. Almafueria’s attitude towards some of the social practices, such as chauvinism and gender inequality, and her interpretation of these is further discussed below.

5.5.2.2 Equality as a mediating value in domestic, social, and professional worlds

Almafueria’s social values and experiences are reflected in topics of chauvinism and gender inequality, discussed by her in regards to family and gender relationships in Argentina and Australia, as in the following account:

... why I choose a non-Latin-American man to share my life? Well, among of the features of the [Latin-American] region is the chauvinism. Very strong chauvinism in all those countries like they don’t have respect for women. And in most of the countries if you see the advertising you’ll be shocked. Like they use the women’s bodies to sell everything (laughs) (Excerpt 11, Int. 1).

Almafueria uses this habitual narrative account (De Fina, 2009) to describe experiences she might not want to present as personal. However, in the following narrative she is explicit about her personal experience and her values in relation to gender issues:

... in my country it’s very ... It’s a very chauvinist country. So, it’s assumed that daughters have to take care of the parents, and sons – not so much. So, I had to also have a fight with my brother who he was then in Spain [when their mother was diagnosed with cancer], was recently divorced and unemployed, and I said: “Look, you don’t have a job, you don’t have a wife, and you have no excuse, so

you need to come back. Because, you know, we are two”. And it was a lot of/yeah a lot of really bad arguments until he came. (Excerpt 12, Int. 2).

While often nostalgically referring to social and cultural experiences, which she shares with her ethnic community, Almafuerta nevertheless objects to some of them. In the account above, Almafuerta positions herself as being able to challenge and oppose existing, traditionally organised practices and behaviours, even if only at the level of her own family. Her marriage to a man from a different cultural background is also an example of her distancing from and opposing to the practices of her own country:

They [Australian and New Zealander men] are more respectful. He [husband] treats me like an equal. And I didn’t have that kind of treatment with my previous partner in Argentina. They don’t treat you like an equal (Excerpt 13, Int. 1).

Using evaluative indexes “respectful”, “equal”, which manifest her search for parity, Almafuerta presents her vision of the “right” gender relations, which she discovered in her latest marriage. It is evident that the notion of equality functions as a mediating factor of relations in Almafuerta’s systems of values. However, her opinion of the Australian family relationships as equal does not extend to her perception of social and professional relations in the world of academia in Australia:

A ... it’s all about egos in academia. They think it’s/they are very objective. Uh ... you know, very rational. They are not. It’s all about egos. All they want to hear from you: “Oh, I read the article – or the book – whatever you wrote. This thing is fantastic!” It’s all about just (little pause) pampering their backs: “Hhh, uhhh!”(whispers) It’s just that makes me vomit (laughs). Especially/especialy men. Men are so egocentric in academia. Yeah. And I just/I found it/I didn’t expect to find so much chauvinism in Australian academia but there is a lot of chauvinism in Australian academia that it raised [eyebrow?]. It took me a while to get around of what’s going on (laughs) I just/There is something here (laughs) that I can’t figure out what it is (laughs) (Excerpt 14, Int. 2).

Almafuerta “performs” the relationships, which she discusses, applying a variety of linguistic and paralinguistic resources: imaginary direct reported speech to ‘animate’ the characters, speech markers “Hhh, uhhh!”, and whispering as though in admiration. De Fina (2006) argues that, “[v]oicing devices, such as alternations between dialogue and narration, pronoun switches, tempo, pitch, loudness, rhythm, are central to strategies of involvement or distancing, to the display of ‘otherness’ with respect to characters and

actions, to the communication of irony, surprise, sarcasm” (pp. 356-357). Almafueria brings irony and laughter as her storytelling strategies to distance herself from the academic relations in the world of the story she presents.

In the above excerpt (14), social relationships in the workplace are described by Almafueria through boundary marking – between her and others, men and women, when the recurrent theme of “chauvinism” marks her interpretation of realities as a product of asymmetrical power relations between the genders. As noted by Blommaert (2007), “words carry with them histories of use and abuse” (p. 8). Almafueria “applies” the same term, “chauvinism”, to the current circumstances, when new inhibitions are evoked, contrasting with her imagined world of Australia. She re-constitutes the social system of gender relationships of her home country in relation to professional environment in Australia, and indirectly positions herself as having an unequal and vulnerable professional status.

Schiff and Noy (2006) argue that communication and interpretation are the processes “through which the social is incorporated into the individual” (p. 349). Almafueria interprets her new social experience and knowledge, acquired during communication with the representatives of the academic world in Australia, in her own terms, based on her existing cultural and social knowledge. It is also evident that the sense of belonging not just to a particular ethnic community but to a particular social class, the middle class, within this community is a sensitive issue for Almafueria, as this becomes a recurrent topic in her narratives of social life, and is discussed below.

5.5.2.3 Perception of reality through the lens of social and cultural experience

In discussing social relationships and social stratification in her home country, as well as in other countries, Almafueria often uses the term “new poor middle class”. This is first mentioned by Almafueria in discussion of economic changes in developing countries:

And I read a lot of Eastern Europe. And the fact is that there are a lot of coincidence between Russia, Argentina in the ninetieth. For example, one of the things that I emphasise in my literature review is the new class, which is the new poor, so middle class people who get impoverished become poor people who get

in poverty, don't get enough money to survive, although they have high level of education, they have the lowest level of consumption (Excerpt 15, Int. 1).

In the above extracts Almafuerta invokes a particular time-space context (developing countries in the 1990s), which is significant not only for her but also for her interlocutor (the researcher) because of the similar situation in Russia. This triggers complex attributes relevant to this context: the period of intensive changes in social and political lives of people in these countries, the issues of instability and social stratification, the emergence of the new social classes. Almafuerta indexes the topics, which are not just arguably accessible for both interlocutors, but which are also “loaded” with the characters or figures (Agha, 2005) of her personhood, her social values and personal interests. The topic of social inequality and injustice emerges as an important issue for Almafuerta not only as part of her PhD study, but also in the context of her childhood memories about the class of “new poor” in Argentina:

When I was a kid in Argentina, we had a lot of fresh immigration. So people who were highly qualified were doing uh low wages job in Argentina. So I get the picture of what was happening here [in Australia] in the country (laughs) (Excerpt 16, Int.1).

These examples demonstrate a chronotopic approach to the discussed topic of social stratification, which links the past and the present time and different locations – Argentina, Russia and Australia – so the past events in other contexts become a source of interpretation of the present situation in the local context, connecting Almafuerta's childhood recollections with the situation of highly skilled migrants in Australia. The recurrent theme of a “new poor” middle class signals the distress of belonging to this class for Almafuerta herself as ‘well-educated’ representative of the middle class (in the country of her origin), with the “lowest level of consumption” and “doing low wages job” in Australia. This fear of being ‘downgraded’ in social (and financial) standing is further explicitly articulated in Almafuerta's analysis of differences between the representatives of middle class in Australia and Argentina:

And middle class, I mean, if you are middle class in Argentina, you are not going to be a middle class – you grab in your hands your belongings and say: “I need to hold on”. Here [in Australia] they know they are middle class, and they continue to be middle class, they are not afraid of the down town mobility, at all. They are not afraid of losing their jobs and be poor (Excerpt 17, Int. 2).

In the above extract, Almafuerta marks boundaries between herself (in association with other representatives of middle class in her home country) and the middle-class people in Australia. This opposition is built through the contrast of pronouns used: “you/I” against “they”. Saying “you grab in your hands your belongings”, Almafuerta visualises a mode of actions, required to sustain your social status in Argentina. This description of agency performed is re-enforced by the direct reported speech of an imaginary middle-class Argentinian person (and herself): “I need to hold on”. Bamberg (2016) argues that agency as a component of identity is better understood through the lens of “navigating the sameness-difference continuum” (p. 6). Acknowledgment of differences between the middle class in Argentina and Australia (and New Zealand) is summarised in Almafuerta’s statement about having an Argentine background:

I know that I have an advantage. Coming from Argentina is that we/we don’t take an offer unanswered (laughs), basically (laughs). We fight for things, because that’s the only way to get ahead (Excerpt 18, Int. 2).

In this extract Almafuerta again refers to her social and cultural background to identify with her ethnic community, contrasting and distancing herself from the local context. In further accounts, Almafuerta contrasts the world of Argentina and Australia in terms of students’ motivations, goals and interests, which are interpreted from a social perspective:

... when I was teaching at the university [in Australia] I realised the expectations of the students are so different. Because their basic needs are covered and they don’t need the urge of work to contribute to the family budget. In Argentina everyone [who] lives with parents has to contribute. Everyone put money just to support the household ... So, the economic worry is not existent for these Australian students (Excerpt 19, Int. 2).

And main motivation for those Australian students as far as I can see is knowing the world, travel the world, work in international organisations. That’s their dream. And it’s completely different from Argentine students, which just want a job, a job that pays well. And then they get more money (laughs) and here we are (laughs) (Excerpt 20, Int. 2).

Contextualising the professional academic environments in Australia and Argentina and comparing young generations of people, Almafuerta reflects on her past and present experiences. Her analysis of students’ motivations and social differences has resulted in

an adjustment of her teaching style of which she is proud and which allows her to portray herself as an ‘intellectual’:

A: So (pause) when I was teaching advertising in Argentina, I usually recommended my best students to advertising agencies. So everyone was highly motivated in my class, because they knew I would recommend them to the people I know in the agencies. And here people were motivated because I told them what sort of skills they would need in the World Bank, or in UNICEF, or in the Red Cross. Uh I bring job descriptions and we match some skills with some things we were doing in class. So it’s so completely different scenario. Completely different motivations. That’s one of things that really surprised me.

R: So, when you can see the differences between the countries ...

A: You have more time to be an intellectual here (laughs). You have more time to think about things without thinking how I am going to pay for the power (Excerpt 21, Int. 2).

Almafuerta lists differences which “surprised” her, marking them with laughter (“And then they [Argentine students] get more money (laughs) and here we are (laughs); “You have more time to be an intellectual here (laughs)”. Bakhtin (1986) pointed out that laughter serves “as means for transcending a situation, rising above it” (p. 134). Almafuerta’s laughter and irony, which she uses in comparing social orders and people’s attitudes towards different aspects of life in Argentina and Australia, reflect complex processes that she experiences.

These processes, revealed as an interplay between different contexts and intercultural comparisons, help to transform Almafuerta’s understanding of her new settings and result in her adaptation to the demands of the new professional environment, re-developing her desired identity as an academic in Australia. Almafuerta determinedly engages herself with social and professional activities and interactions in order to get access to employment related discourses. However, the multiple boundaries she builds between herself and others, as well as the consistency and continuity of Almafuerta’s presentation of self as a member of her ethnic community manifest that her sense of identity is strongly rooted in her ethnic origin, and somewhat restrains her adjustment to the new environment.

Wenger (1998) argues that “[i]n a landscape defined by boundaries and peripheries, a coherent identity is of necessity a mixture of being in and being out” (p. 165). Almafuerta’s attempts to be socially engaged with the desired community of practice

(Wenger, 1998) – the world of academia with which she wants to be affiliated professionally – do actually further distance her from it, partially because of the way she interprets and reflects on her experience. What is obvious from the accounts provided is that Almafuerta is constantly constructing differences and pointing out contrasts. This process of differentiation, mixed with negative evaluation of events and actions, manifest the complex transitional processes of adaptation and adjustment Almafuerta goes through, highlighted in her experience of getting a PhD qualification.

5.5.3 Doctoral degree as a social adaptation strategy and a factor influencing Almafuerta's processes of self-definition

The trajectory of Almafuerta's adaptation and adjustment is directly expressed and traced in the narratives about obtaining her PhD qualifications in Australia. Her PhD study journey is described in neutral terms, but conveyed with irony and laughter:

[PhD] it's like a certificate that Australian education system say: "Ok, she is good! If she can complete PhD, she must be intelligent". So, it's like an assessment, national assessment of your abilities. If you don't have Australian qualification – except if you are coming from England. If you come from another country – not England or United States – but from another country, and you have a qualification – they doubt it. They doubt. They don't believe you (laughs). My perception. (Excerpt 22, Int. 2).

I tell you – the Australian perception, if you haven't studied in Australia, or in United States, or in UK – you are stupid. Or less intelligent (laughs) (Excerpt 23, Int. 2).

In the above extracts Almafuerta is identifying, marking and constructing a distinct boundary between qualifications obtained in different countries and linking them to the intelligence of students. The above narratives, though accomplished with laughter, obviously are not intended to be funny: the content of the narrative – underestimated overseas qualifications in Australia and perception of being unintelligent – is directly related to Almafuerta's own experience. She takes an ironic stance using imaginary reported speech, representing the "voice" of the Australian higher education system: "Ok, she is good! If she can complete PhD [here], she must be intelligent". Laughter is used

by Almafuerta on many occasions throughout all three interviews, marking sensitive and delicate issues and contrasting the content of the story, as in the following example:

A: ... Oh, well, it was a huge relief to hand in [the thesis]. As I say in the previous interview, the whole experience made me really stressful ... emotionally drained at the very beginning of the PhD, I don't know. I wouldn't recommend anyone to do a PhD (laughs). Especially in the second language.

R: Oh.

A: That'll be my message: "Don't do a PhD" (laughs).

R: (laughs)

A: You know, I was at the lectures. And people say: "Oh, I was really enjoying PhD. That's my passion". No, I can't say that. I'd say it was a living hell (laughs) (Excerpt 24, Int. 3).

In the above excerpt Almafuerta adopts a negative reporting stance ("really stressful"; "emotionally drained") in referring to her PhD studies, which, she believes, "will give me advantage, I suppose" (Int. 3). She makes reference to the previous interview, sequentially connecting her recent and past experience and shaping her narrative on the basis of her previous saying, thus pointing to the prolonged stressful period in which she has been for some time. In describing her PhD experience, Almafuerta contrasts herself with other people who were "enjoying" their PhD, when for her it was "a living hell".

Her PhD experience may be read as symbolically linked to her migration experience. This is her personal experience, but it is also a symbolic migration experience, marked by negative evaluative references, laughter, irony and sarcasm. She projects her future in terms of the past, like in the following example:

R: Yeah. What do you expect from the future? What are your goals here, in Australia?

A: Well, let me tell you (laughs). All my life I've been writing goals. Like, monthly goals, yearly goals. None of them worked (laughs).

R: (laughs) So you prefer not to have plans at all?

A: Well, I learnt that you have to be realistic. That you have to have realistic approach, pragmatic approach. At the moment, I can't project myself because I don't know if I'm going to be here or I want to move. At the moment I'm emerged in the sea of uncertainty. So I can't tell you (Excerpt 25, Int. 2).

The metaphor used – "I'm emerged in the sea of uncertainty" – is illustrative of Almafuerta's perception of her current position. Labov (1972) argues that metaphor can be seen as an intensifier in that it selects an event and in the telling and strengthens it. The

uncertainty of Almafuerta's situation is also reflected in the process of her self-identification in all three interviews and email exchanges. According to Bucholtz and Hall (2004), "... identification is [an] ongoing social and political process" (p. 376), therefore it is crucial "... to attend closely to speakers' own understanding of their identities" (p. 371).

The following extract explicitly presents Almafuerta's perception of her nationality identity from interview 1:

A: Oh, I identify myself as an Australian and as an Argentine. So, I identify myself as a broad nationality.

R: Fifty-fifty? Or another proportion?

A: Uh, fifty-fifty. I think I have one foot in this country and the other foot in Argentina. I feel like a hybrid (Excerpt 26, Int. 1).

In her e-mails, sent between Interview 1 and Interview 2, Almafuerta claims her ethnic belonging only, pointing to the differences between the nations:

I do not identify myself as Australian. I have Australian citizenship and I will always be very grateful with this country but I identify myself as an Argentinean. (E-mail 2, punctuation by A.).

Australian could not be more different from Argentinians. (E-mail 3).

With time, her self-identity is changing, as Almafuerta claims in her third interview:

I just want to be an Argentine touched [about her chosen pseudonym – Almafuerta, after a famous Argentine author] (Excerpt 27, Int. 3).

R: Uh-hu. I see. Has anything changed with your self-identification? You told me you were half-Australian, half-Argentine [in Int. 1]. Has it changed?

A: I think, I'm more Australian now. But I think maybe I feel half-kiwi, half-Australian (laughs) (Excerpt 28, Int. 3).

In the following extract it can be seen that the shift in professional identity takes place too, expressed as a shift in nationality identity:

R: You told me [in Int. 2] that your PhD was for a kind of certification of intelligence ...

A: That people know that you are intelligent (with a smile).

R: (laughs) Yes! So, do you feel more intelligent now? (laughs)

A: There was difference when I approached Auckland University. Because I was not anymore Argentine, studied in Argentina and had Masters. But I was a PhD student with almost thesis completed, you know, in Australia, from an Australian university. So, it was a different position. When I was writing these e-mails, then I was talking from a different position. I was more respected. Because they know University of New South Wales. It's not the same as the University of Saint Andreas. Most of kiwis know the University of New South Wales. It's also part of "the group of eight". You know, from the group of eight are the most prestigious universities in Australia. It's a different thing. You have a back. The name of the institution is the back (Excerpt 28, Int. 3).

In the above extract the process of constructing new layers of Almafuerta's identity is evident. Starting as a dialogue with the researcher's initiation to discuss the effect of a PhD degree on Almafuerta's perception of herself, it turns into a monologic narrative. The change from dialogue to monologue marks "big movements" in all three interviews. The references which both interlocutors make to the prior interviews provide an opportunity to create continuity between the past and present conversations in constructing an identity shift as a change in Almafuerta's professional positioning, from unemployed professional with Argentine qualifications to a holder of a PhD from a recognised Australian university, and therefore being "more respected".

Here, Almafuerta again moves across spatio-temporal scales by using geographic references, thus accumulating geography of the self, listing and comparing her education in Argentina and Australia, and educational institutions in these countries. This is the accumulated cultural "baggage" (Bourdieu, 1977), which she takes with her: the old one, whose significance is rather downgraded, and the new one, with which she connects her expectations for the future. She builds confidence in strengthening her professional positioning by pointing to the "prestige" level of the university where she was undertaking her PhD degree while downplaying the standing of her local university. In addition, she uses the casual token "you know" – which is usually not a characteristic feature of her narratives – twice in one paragraph constructing her argument as intersubjectively obvious for both interlocutors.

When she says "I was not anymore Argentine", she argues that in the eyes of the academic world in Australia and New Zealand she might have acquired another identity (alongside with acquiring her PhD degree) – more prestigious and desirable for the new context of her residence. For Almafuerta becoming a Doctor serves as a key feature of her Australian

identity. However, at the same time and in the same paragraph Almafuerta acknowledges her identity in terms of perceived characteristics of Argentine (Latin American) behaviour and national disposition:

Still I am Argentine, I'm sceptic by nature. I'm not very optimistic (both laugh). I'm from Latin America. We all are not negative but uh how can I say? – Nostalgic, sceptic. One of the cultural characteristics of Argentina. That's what tango expressed. We are always sad. We always regret things. (Excerpt 29, Int. 3).

The process of Almafuerta's self-representation as a member of Latin America community still actively takes place. She conceptualises what it means for her to be an Argentine: "sceptic, nostalgic, sad, regret things". In discussing various topics, Almafuerta keeps referring to her Argentine (Latin American) heritage and her "previous", residual identity, thus bringing up the issue of importance of the "primary", "core" identity.

5.5.4 Summary

During the one year period of data collection, changes in Almafuerta's perception of the world and social relationships, her professional identity and her self-identification were evident. These are the processes mediated by the different contexts and various discourses, as well as by access to different sources of information and social positions. Her identity construction is linked to discursive and communicative processes, which reflect her struggle for social recognition. Almafuerta participates in multiple and overlapping communities (academic, ethnic), and the variety of contexts and different circumstances (e.g. work in a new place, or new hierarchies that emerge in intercultural contact) impact on the elements of her identity. It emerges that the new layers of her identity overlay with other layers including a residual one, which is connected to her ethnic belonging and self-identification.

Almafuerta seems to go through a complex development of sustaining and acquiring multiple positions, ranging from belonging to her ethnic community to becoming an Australian (after receiving her PhD Degree). Her struggle and determination to become a PhD qualified specialist to "fit in" the setting and become recognised as a professional in

Australia demonstrates a high level of investment. This investment was supposed not only to get her access to a wider range of symbolic and material resources (Norton Peirce, 1995) but also serve as an example of the process of adequation or “pursuit of socially recognised sameness” (Bucholtz & Hall, 2004, p. 383). Adequation, as argued by Bucholtz and Hall (2004), involves the concept of likeness and belonging – the basis for self-identity and an indicator of social and professional recognition.

Almafuerta wants to be located in the academic landscape, but on the other hand she characterises it and its practices in unflattering expressions. The way of entering the academic environment by being a student means that she limits her participation to a lower order role, when hierarchical power becomes a sub-dimension of the social relationships, impacting on Almafuerta’s ability to negotiate the meanings in the contexts of her interest. It appears that her criticism of local social relationships in academia is probably a reflection of her inability to “fit in”, which in turn further hinders her capacity to become fully engaged in these relationships. At the same time, her ability to “multiply” herself by frequently moving in time and space shapes her capacity for communication and negotiation of the changing aspects of her identity.

However, there is a strong tension between her sense of primary belonging to Argentina (always home) and other locations; there is the pull from the “mother” country through language, culture, and ethnic membership. Almafuerta keeps “seeing” the world through her “primary” self – her residual identity – and this is evident in her constant references to the past events, her travelling in time and space, her self-representation. This sense of belonging appears to be the strongest aligning force – bilingual, bicultural, a hybrid, which actually shapes Almafuerta’s changing identity.

CHAPTER 6: DISCUSSION

Introduction

In this chapter the findings from the analysis of all the cases are drawn together and discussed in comparison. Dissimilarities and parallels between cases are examined and discussed both at a micro level (for the cases in this study), and a macro level (in relation to the wider community of skilled immigrants). The issues of professional and social self-identification and their interrelatedness with the processes of professional and social adjustment of skilled immigrants to the new settings are discussed. In addition, the discursive construction of skilled immigrants' identity claims, in terms of the linguistic resources and communicative strategies they draw upon to represent themselves in the new environment, are also examined and analysed across the cases.

These findings are further discussed in relation to relevant societal issues and contexts, such as the ideas of multiculturalism and immigration, language policy and requirements. The role that these societal issues play in supporting or constraining processes of skilled immigrants' successful accommodation in the new settings is also discussed.

6.1 Defining and re-defining sense of professional self

The analysis of the cases revealed that the participants' identity claims made in relation to their previous, present, and projected professional self-identification reflect the changes and challenges they experienced during the transitional period of their settlement in Australia. The experience of being unemployed and seeking professional employment emerged as important factors impacting on the self-perceptions of four out of five participants in the research, who experienced difficulties in their search for work. Two of them postponed their attempts to gain entry into the local workforce by choosing higher research degree studies (PhD) at Australian Universities as alternative pathways to further professional accommodation in the new settings. Only one participant, Anouk, gained employment soon after arrival in Australia. Her case, however, revealed that, in spite of being employed, she also underwent challenging re-considerations of her sense of professional self, such as doubting her capabilities and needing to seek help because of perceived language problems. This indicated that not only periods of unemployment and

searching for jobs might impact on skilled immigrants' professional identities, but also their differences in language and culture, which made them feel less skilled and capable in their professions.

As all participants had positive previous work experience in their fields of expertise, each subsequently brought with them a strong sense of professional identity. All participants revealed high levels of determination to retain their status as skilled and well educated professionals, though construing their professional identifications differently, and demonstrating various levels of attachment to pre-existing professional selves. For Flavio, Amir and Anouk, their previous professional identities were dominant points of reference in constructing a sense of professional self in the new environment. Their identity work consisted of protecting, re-constructing, and re-claiming their previously confident, but currently threatened or weakened sense of professional selves. However, for Almafuerta and Gabriela, it was their desire to retain the status of well-educated individuals who could perform skilled work that appeared to be more important than an attachment to a previous professional self. Both reconsidered the direction of their professional development as they felt unable to carry on previous careers in the new settings, and preferred to build new professional identities adjacent to their original careers.

6.1.1 Culturally dependent profession, and a struggle to renegotiate a sense of self

Almafuerta's and Gabriela's decision to renegotiate their existing professional selves was reportedly made after a series of unsuccessful attempts to secure work in the field of journalism. Remennick (2013) has argued that for professionals such as journalists, educators, and lawyers it is more difficult to find a place in new societies, as their professions are "culture-dependent", meaning that they are strongly grounded in local contexts and languages, and therefore such specialists have "the hardest time applying their talents on a different cultural soil" (p. 157). For both Almafuerta and Gabriela this displacement was most strongly felt in terms of a perception that each had insufficient levels of English language required in their field, restricting their abilities to perform professional duties. Acknowledging the necessity to strengthen their CALP in English through further education, both Almafuerta and Gabriela were determined to find and establish their professional "voice" in the new environment, rather than simply learning

professional English and terminology. It emerged, however, that it was not just their perceived deficient language skills that motivated them to reconsider their professional pathways, but a combination of additional factors that impacted on their self-perceptions and goals.

Amongst the factors impacting on Gabriela's and Almafuerta's decisions to modify their professional selves, was their reported belief that the quality and currency of their overseas educational qualifications was doubted by Australians ("They don't trust tertiary teaching institutions outside Australia, except United States or England" [Almafuerta]; "because we are from Latin America, so they think we are poor, and undeveloped, with no education, which is not true" [Gabriela]). Almafuerta and Gabriela express their disagreement with this characterisation of their skills and abilities, revealing a conflict between how they were reportedly perceived by others, and how they perceived themselves, in statements such as, "I think: Oh, I'm quite qualified" (Gabriela); "[the] Australian perception, if you haven't studied in Australia, or in United States, or in UK – you are stupid. Or less intelligent" (Almafuerta). A perception of being undervalued in the new settings, alongside with the decreased valuing of previous educational credentials and the sense of a diminished professional self are determining factors in their decision to enter the Australian workforce via new educational experience. For Almafuerta, it was the pursuit of a PhD Degree; for Gabriela – a Masters in Marketing, a Certificate in Vocational and Educational Training, and a future PhD, while also undertaking courses of English language.

A desire to get a PhD from an Australian university was based on Almafuerta's perception of being undervalued not only in terms of her English and her education, but also in respect of her intellectual capabilities ("[w]hen you have a PhD, it's like your knowledge is assessed in this country...for Australian standards you are 'officially intelligent'"). Striving to prove her professional credentials and become recognised as having a professional "voice", Almafuerta also attempts to establish a "global", international educational identity. She is hopeful that her investment in higher education will assist in positioning herself as a higher role participant within a professional context and in a wider society, allowing her to negotiate an identity position from a higher rather than lower point.

Even though Gabriela's adjustment strategies and trajectory of alignment with professional settings differs from Almafuerta's, there are similarities. While Almafuerta relies mostly on a singular investment in a higher degree and in activities only relevant to her study, Gabriela makes multiple investments. Pursuing her desire to find a professional "voice" in the new settings, she invests in additional qualifications, improving her English, and establishing social networks to approach the level of her previous qualified professional standing. It appears, however, that not all her investments have paid off: an investment in creating social networking not only doesn't result in anticipated employment, but leads to misconception of her professional identity and reconsideration of her investment strategies. Her temporary identity as a caterer is misread by current and potential employers rendering her marketing qualifications invisible and producing an ambiguous identity position, through professional and working class identity over accumulation.

It is evident, that in their pursuit of professional employment, the skilled immigrant participants explore different pathways and make different investments. However, not only do the investment strategies not lead to anticipated outcomes, but sometimes they even result in unintended unwelcomed consequences. Furthermore, it is argued that it is not just the choice of strategies or their application that prevent skilled immigrants from positioning themselves as suitably educated and skilled professionals in their new settings, but the structures of power and ideologies of the host society, which impact on processes of skilled immigrants' adjustment to the new settings.

Gabriela's and Almafuerta's perceptions of being undervalued as non-English speakers are consistent with theoretical understanding and empirical findings in relation to dominant culture practices. Bourdieu (1977) spoke of the "symbolic domination", which is maintained by dominant social groups by means of language, through establishing and legitimization the norms of linguistic resources and practices (p. 648). Pavlenko and Blackledge's (2004) found that speakers of official languages or standard varieties may be regarded as having greater moral and intellectual value than speakers of unofficial languages or non-standard varieties.

The experiences of the participants in the present study shifted from their perceived insufficient language skills to the reported disregard of their professional expertise. These experiences are in contradiction not only to their self-perception as well-educated and

intelligent professionals, but to their formally recognised status in Australia, being granted skilled immigrant visas on the basis of their educational and professional credentials (including their knowledge of English), and therefore recognised as fit for the Australian workforce as professionals. This contradiction created tension between participants' overall self-perceptions supported by officially recognised status, and their inability to professionally and socially position themselves according to these perceptions. This tension both stagnated and stimulated the skilled immigrants' adaptation to the new environment, "fuelling" their investments in further educational and professional development, while also causing difficulties in terms of their professional self-identification.

The inability to negotiate high professional status – capital combined with limited social capital or "connections to networks of power" (Darvin & Norton, 2015, p. 44) – reveals the complexity of the situation for skilled immigrants, where they need to transform their cultural and social resources into meaningful "assets" in new settings. For the specialists in culture- and language-dependent professions, the paths to professional environment is even more complex, and requires significant personal re-configuration and re-alignment within the new social and cultural settings in order to be recognised.

6.1.2 Interdisciplinary identity of engineers as representatives of "culturally neutral" profession, and search for professional recognition

The argument presented by both Flavio and Amir that the engineering profession is a worldwide recognised commodity reveals a sense of confidence in their professional capabilities and their belief in the transportability of their professional skills to any settings. Their discourse reflects a perception of engineering professions being based on a "veritable set of skills and credentials" and therefore "most convertible between various national contexts" (Remennick, 2013, p. 5). Such a perception of the universal nature of the engineering profession appears as one of the shaping forces of Amir's and Flavio's professional identities.

By maintaining an argument of belonging to a trans-international group of professionals, both Flavio and Amir attempt to transfer their sense of professional identity across

international borders, seeking social and professional recognition through asserting equivalence and value. And though such equivalence was formally established via accreditation of their overseas qualifications with engineering professional bodies in Australia, both experience challenges related to reported disparities between their expectations and the realities of employment in the new country of residence. Attempting to justify and deal with the unforeseen circumstances of unemployment and their search for work, they both make professional identity adjustments.

By claiming external reasons (such as a market downturn) as one of several major obstacles to professional employment, Amir and Flavio both invoke issues of agency and praxis. Ahearn (2010) refers to agency as the “socioculturally mediated capacity to act” (p. 31), and, after Silverstein (1976, 1993), argues that agency can be analysed by examining how people talk about it. By attributing responsibility for being unsuccessful job candidates to the economic decline, both Amir and Flavio exhibit their reduced sense of agency to act according to their intentions. While Flavio blames external mediating difficulties beyond his control, such as unwelcoming authorities and employers, Amir identifies his underdeveloped English language skills as an internal obstacle to gaining employment.

The need for adjustments, which contradicts the argument of a smooth “transportability” of professional skills in engineering, affects the participants differently. While it prompts Amir to recapitalise on his efforts to work on the issue (practising English during casual work at hotels, and starting Doctoral studies in his professional field), demonstrating a flexible attitude to adjusting himself to the new environment, for Flavio any amendments to his established sense of professional self produce a sense of distress.

An issue for Flavio is not just the tension between his belief in the universality of his professional skills and his incapability to instantly apply them in another country. His perceptions are arguably connected to his desire and failure to transport his previous “expatriate” status with all its constituents (e.g. recognised social ranking; highly regarded professional credentials; easy access to workplace and lifestyle privileges) to the new settings. His unrealised expectation for particular professional and social positioning is expressed in his criticism of employment strategies, such as social and professional networking practices, and the requirement for references. Attempting to justify his difficulties, Flavio refers to all immigrants through an argument of the need of

skilled immigrants' career development in order to contribute to the prosperity of the country. His belated expression that he should start his career from a lower level position to get exposed to local market requirements is a recognition of the necessity of specific alignment with the local construction industry. This discourse represents a compromise to Flavio's principles of professional engagement and marks a reluctant readiness to modify his professional attitude. It appears that the transportability hypothesis hinders Flavio from critically observing new circumstances and himself in these new circumstances, forcing him to search for external reasons for his difficulties.

In contrast to Flavio's position, Amir personalises his problems and frequently modifies his employment strategies. He explores different points of entry into the workforce, shifting from on-line applications to social networking and, when that proves to be inefficient, back to on-line applications. His readiness to start his professional career in Australia from a junior level reflects his flexibility in adjusting to the new settings. It is noteworthy, however, that the lower professional start was presented by both Flavio and Amir as a hypothetical measure – an accommodative strategy, which could assist them to regain their previous professional standing and expand it further.

To sum up, despite the perception that some professions such as engineering are argued to be culturally neutral and “universal”, entry into such fields was not seamless, with multiple misalignments evident in these cases. Neither recognition of overseas engineering qualifications, along with professional association accreditation and association membership, nor their overseas work experience immediately translated into employment for these participants. The ideology of the universal nature of some professions, tested in the new settings, revealed a contradiction between the participants' belief in the universal applicability of their skills, and the necessity for adjustments to the new professional environment. This contradiction impacted not only on the participants' perceptions of their new environment, but on their self-perception, and the process of negotiating their professional selves during their search for employment in conditions when agency is reduced. It appears that the complexity of skilled immigrants' personal and professional biographies is not well understood by potential employers and colleagues, and in this respect is not well understood by some skilled immigrants themselves who have not been required to look at themselves in a new way.

6.1.3 Negotiation of professional voice in a new professional setting

Even when the employment is gained soon after arrival, skilled immigrants still experience significant difficulties, impacting on their professional self-perceptions in the new workforce. Gaining employment at a level lower than a previous professional standing, leads to the re-consideration of professional requirements and ultimately of immigrants' abilities in the new settings. While talking about positive aspects of a lower professional positioning ("I'm allowed to make mistakes", "have more time [for writing]"), Anouk experienced negative consequences of such professional downgrading for her self-perception as a professional, as well as for her overall self-confidence.

One among several demoting experiences to her sense of professional self was the perceived "loss" of a professional "voice" in the new environment. Anouk's perceived underdeveloped professional register of English (in terms of being unable to generate professional documents on her own and thus failing to accomplish professional tasks at the level she performed in her home country) led to the appropriation of professional voices of colleagues. Appropriation and "assimilation" of the voices and words of others (Bakhtin, 1986, p. 89) is recognized by Lantolf and Pavlenko (2000) as a stage of identity reconstruction. Anouk's narratives reveal that this process of voice appropriation for professional purposes was a distressing experience. Reported positive and supportive attitudes from her colleagues contradicted her self-perception as an incompetent specialist in the new language environment ("They [colleagues] give me a positive feedback – so I should be happy with that, I should be proud of that"; "I know that what I'm doing right now is never good enough"). Anouk's negotiation of these different voices through a process of intense reflection ultimately resulted in a shift towards a more confident and constructive professional self.

This finding demonstrates that personal reflections on, and analysis of, difficulties and negative experiences can become a starting point in a process of identity reconstruction in new professional environments. A diminished sense of professional self and desire to regain and confirm professional status motivated Anouk to work on "weaknesses" in her professional abilities and self-perception, and improve not just her skills and professional positioning, but also adopt a more positive view of herself. Characteristically, in discussing her changing self-perceptions Anouk shifts from establishing her local

position, in comparison with new colleagues, to more global identifications, emergent in comparisons between her sense of self in Australia and in her home country. This process of psychological “upscaling” (Blommaert, 2005) from local to translocal contexts not only evidences transitional processes of relocation and mobility of professional identity, but also demonstrates the role of strong connections to a previous professional self.

6.1.4 Conclusion

The importance of professional self-identification and the construction of a sense of belonging to a group of well-educated and skilled professionals emerges as one of the main factors, stimulating participants of this study to find not just any work, but occupy a relevant professional niche in the new environment. Ho (2006) argued that “[g]uided by a market-oriented approach that views migration through the lens of economic efficiency, the [Australian] government has constructed its ideal migrant as an educated and highly employable professional who will not become a ‘drain’ on the public purse” (p. 1). While all the participants’ in the current study had a strong potential to be considered as “ideal” immigrants, neither high level of qualifications, nor extensive previous overseas work experience and active efforts of the participants’ search for employment, led to securing positions in the areas of their expertise. “High” level English language skills, as tested for visa purposes, did not serve as a guarantee for gaining employment in their profession. Initially intended to improve the quality of immigration, selective immigration policies in Australia, Canada, and many OECD countries have evolved to provide a platform for international competition to attract highly educated and skilled employees (Docquier & Rapoport, 2008). It appears, however, that while successful in attracting skilled immigrants, these immigration policies do not reveal the realities of matching professional skills with professional employment, ignoring other personal and professional dimensions that skilled immigrants bring to the new setting.

Despite formal recognition of educational and professional credentials, professional association accreditation and association membership, it emerges that the recognition of qualifications at local levels, the level of employers, is not without challenges. This requirement is also connected to recognition and acknowledgement of overseas work experience, which is often discounted. Thus, though recognised as professionals, who are

“ready” to benefit the economic development of the country, skilled immigrants struggle to deal with the challenges of the recruiting process, of understanding different workplace cultures, and of managing their own perceptions of the process of adjustment to a new culture. Misconceptions regarding the nature of their professions in a new setting, often lead to the collapse of skilled immigrants’ expectations and beliefs. Findings from the study question both the “true” global character of the professional world in a time of apparent globalisation, and the adoption of its ideology, when even representatives of culturally “neutral” professions face significant difficulties in applying their skills and expertise in new professional environments. While globalisation provides opportunities for human capital to flow worldwide, with current global political developments, such as Brexit in the UK, and migrations bans in the United States of America, it is arguable that the perception of a seamless transportability of knowledge and skills across the nations might be somewhat deceptive and idealistic.

Inability to gain employment or to match professional standards in previous and present professional fields, while formally meeting the requirements of professional employment, triggers processes of adjustment and modulation to participants’ sense of professional identities. Notwithstanding various challenges that skilled immigrants experience on the way to anticipated employment or during the process of adaptation to new professional settings, a sense of professional identity, modified, adjusted or reconsidered, appears to be the main driving force for their desire to find a place in the workforce and in Australian life. All the participants expressed a determination to sustain and maintain a sense of self and professional and social participation. Underpinning the tensions of seeking participation in a professional workforce are fundamental concerns related to the function of social engagement as a means of professional positioning, and in reverse, as a sense of professional identity is interwoven into the social self.

6.2 Social identity and its interconnectedness with professional self-identity

The discussion of professional identities of participants was often closely connected to the discussion of their social lives, revealing points of intersection between the two, with a number of themes emerging. Such themes included Australia as a land of migrants in relation to the theme of English as a language of communication;

connections to communities of practice/membership in relation to various groups of people and their impact on the participants' sense of self; and intercultural comparisons of their native and newly found settings and various levels of attachment to previous social environments. The discussion of these themes revealed processes of participants' alignment/misalignment with the new social settings. It also highlighted discrepancies between circulated discourses and reality regarding the issues of immigration policies, the ideas of multicultural society, and English as "idealized and monolithic entity" (Kachru & Nelson, 2006, p. 2).

6.2.1 The construct of "Australia as a land of migrants", English language, and participants' self-perceptions in relation to these themes

The discursive construct of "Australia as a land of migrants" was a shared theme for all the participants of the study. Their perceptions were consistent with the current circulating discourse of Australia as a country being built and shaped by immigrants (Walsh, 2014), with one of the highest intake of immigrants in the world since the World War II (Wright, 2015; Akbari & MacDonald, 2014). While discussing perceptions of Australia as an immigrant country, participants, however, expressed different understandings of what it meant for them, indicating complexity of the construct. Amir and Almafuerta indirectly defined Australians as speakers of native English, while for Flavio true Australians were associated with indigenous people only, marking all others as immigrants. For Gabriela, all Australians were also immigrants, with no difference acknowledged of their period of Australian residency or birthplace. Beyond this discussion was Anouk's narrative, where she argued that "Australians are not different from any Western country [people]" and pointed to the multicultural mix of Australian society as a feature of the new environment.

While expressing different perceptions of the construct of Australia as a land of migrants, all participants in the study referred to the concept of Australia as a multicultural society, which has been shaping Australian government policy since the early 1970's (Walsh, 2014). In this policy, multiculturalism is defined as

- recognition of diverse cultural identities of its residents;

- social justice – “the right to equality of treatment and opportunity, removal of barriers of race, ethnicity, culture, religion, language, gender, or place of birth”; and
- economic efficiency, meaning “the need to maintain, develop, and utilise effectively the skills and talents of all Australians, regardless of their background” (Department of Social Services, 2014, cited in Healey, 2016, p. 8).

All these dimensions of multiculturalism as a policy are referred to by participants in the process of trying to make sense of their immigrant experiences.

Arguing that all Australians are immigrants, Flavio and Gabriela both questioned the issue of their perceived unequal and biased treatment during the employment process, and wanted to be considered as equally suitable candidates for advertised vacancies. Their reported experience of being rejected on the grounds of the lack of “local experience” and absence of “references from other people” (Flavio), and being “international”, meaning that “English is not your first language” (Gabriela) triggered their labelling of such attitudes as “unfair”. While Flavio raises the issue of discrepancy between the policies of inviting skilled immigrants and not providing them with opportunities to realise their potential (thus opposing a widespread argument that skilled migration is considered one of the key elements for current and future economic development in Australia [Chiswick, 2005]), Gabriela points to inconsistencies between declared equal opportunities and her experienced unequal attitude towards people from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds in the professional workforce.

Anouk’s perception of multiculturalism in Australia was mentioned in relation to other people as she discussed potential discrimination from locals towards groups of refugees and asylum seekers (people who “don’t speak” the language), and a lack of sensitivity from some of her work colleagues to people from other linguistic backgrounds (arguably referring to herself). Drawing attention to the unequal treatment of people on the basis of their cultural and language backgrounds, which contradicted the multicultural policies of social justice and cultural diversity, Anouk, however, did not connect this explicitly to her personal experience. Implicitly she discussed her experiences as being perceived as needing help because of her lack of English language skills, but not in connection with the government policy.

Amir's and Almafuerta' opinions on native language skills as a criteria of being Australian not only revealed their perceptions of what constitutes a "true" Australian resident, but also disclosed their misconceptions regarding what is referred to as native English". Their perception of "native" language speakers is an exemplar of seeing English language as a homogeneous and monolithic phenomenon (Pennycook, 2011). Pennycook (2011) describes this as one of the dimensions of the paradigm of "World Englishes", referring to countries such as the USA, UK and Australia as having large English-speaking populations, where "the varieties of spoken English are considered the standard norms for the rest of the world" (p. 519). Pennycook (2011), however, acknowledges further that this paradigm does not correspond with the reality of the modern world, with its processes of globalisation and fluid flows of human capital, as neglecting "the inclusive and plural character of the world-wide phenomenon [of English language]" (Kachru & Nelson, 2006, p. 2).

Amir's and Almafuerta's perceptions regarding native language arguably reflect their belief in the power of English language in the imagined community of "native speakers", which they struggle to join. Their perceptions, however, seem to be deceptive, depending on how and whom they define as native language speakers and with whom they want to be affiliated. Linguistic diversification of the population of Australia, with nearly 20 per cent of residents speaking a language other than English at home (Healey, 2016), and the increasing variety of English language environments, neither tied exclusively to native or nativised varieties (Kirkpatrick, 2006), presents a challenge of identifying which particular language community to be associated with. The result of such association reflects the view that modern English is not "a product located in the mind of the speaker", but "a social process constantly reconstructed in sensitivity to environmental factors" (Canagarajah, 2007, p. 91).

The issue of English language competency was touched upon from different perspectives by all participants. This is allied with and somewhat shaped by the immigration policies of the Australian state, and arguably, worldwide, reflecting Blommaert, Leppänen, and Spotti's (2012) observation that English language proficiency potentially represents "a form of modernist linguistic border control, in which 'modern' (and thus essentialist) regimes of identity attribution are central, and in which a static, mono-normative and artefactualised concept of language is used" (p. 2). Globally, to qualify as a skilled migrant, English language skills in English speaking countries have the same or a higher

value than any other portable resource (e.g. qualifications and work experience). In Australia, for example, skilled immigrants earn more points for passing on the highest band in IELTS than for 8-10 years of work experience in their home countries (20 points to 15 respectively) (DIAC, 2012). It is argued, however, that the success of skilled workers in settling into a new country goes beyond a narrow conception of language skills, measured by a test, but requires knowledge of local language practices, flexibility in communication, values, and use of a variety of linguistic and pragmatic resources (Canagarajah, 2013).

While not only achieving the threshold language requirements of the immigration policies, but exceeding them, no participant felt confident in using English language in all domains of life. Anouk's linguistic capital, for example, her knowledge of "social" English, was not immediately transferable to the new professional economy, neither was Flavio's and Amir's knowledge of "professional" English. Though English is the dominant and official language in the new setting, its vernacular use created a challenge for participants, as norms of use overrode their existing proficiencies. It emerged that it was not the overall generic level of English language knowledge that played a critical role in a successful skilled immigrants' accommodation, but the pragmatic and contextual use and application of English language skills in various contexts. The assumption of a "uniform" English language, which exists not only in the "minds" of newly arrived immigrants, but also at the level of policies, dismisses the idea of cross-cultural exposure outside one's linguistic community, lessening an awareness of pragmatic variations of language in use.

While increased requirements for English language levels have been justified in terms of the more immediate employability of non-English speaking background immigrant professionals (Hawthorne, 2005), it is evidenced in this study that higher levels of English language proficiency do not necessarily translate into higher employability amongst skilled immigrants from linguistically and culturally diverse backgrounds. At a policy level, the strong emphasis on "English-only" denies the value of social, linguistic and cultural capital fundamental to the ongoing lives of newly arrived independent skilled immigrants, and their participation in various domains of life. In this respect there is an unaddressed gap between the aspiration of Australian skilled immigration policies and programmes, and what role they play in improving employability of this cohort of immigrants.

The discussion of the construct Australia as land of migrants and its perceived constituents (such as various dimensions of multiculturalism, immigration policies, English as a language of local communication) revealed that the participants' perceptions of reality of living in Australia often mismatched and even contradicted the anticipations they had prior to migration. This was particularly evident in references to the inferences of acceptance and recognition realised in the granting of entry visas based on professional background and their assessed knowledge of English. The issue for participants was that linguistic challenges were related not only to language policy, but also to social discourse and participation in the professional worlds they sought access to.

Castles (2014) argues that: "... the experience of migration and of living in another country often leads to modification of original plans, so migrants' intentions at the time of departure are poor predictors of actual behaviour"(p. 2). However, in this study it was not just participants' intentions and behaviour (in terms of the accommodative strategies used) that have changed during the period of settlement in Australia, but most importantly, it is their sense of self-identification and positioning that underwent changes and adjustment. This study revealed the tensions that might have prompted such processes of adjustment. The circumstances when some professional and social capacities were not easily moved, relocated, and resettled, arguably stimulated participants to reconsider, adjust, and sometimes "reconstruct their languages, cultures, and identities to their advantage" (Canagarajah, 1999, p. 2). These changes and adjustments to participants' sense of identity were reflected in their narrative accounts, often through comparisons of previous and current cultural and social settings and their self-perceptions regarding those settings, and in relation to their sense of belonging to different communities of practice and various groups of people.

6.2.2 Self-identifications: becoming and a sense of belonging

The participants' narratives regarding their sense of belonging to different groups and communities of practice reveal different dimensions of their identities based not only on various social categories, but also on activities with which they associate themselves and in which they are involved (Bucholtz & Hall, 2004; Goodwin, 1990). Using different strategies, participants attempted to accomplish their social goals, which were often interconnected with their professional aims. This process of achieving or failing to

achieve their goals shapes participants' self-perceptions during the process of adaptation to the new settings. It also becomes evident that the participants' efforts to achieve their professional goals and position themselves as highly qualified specialists were not always equal to their attempts to be involved in Australian social life to the same degree.

Sense of belonging: feeling the "other", and becoming an "other"

Data revealed that all participants showed different levels of attachment to their "previous" cultural, social, and professional environments, which impacted on their self-perceptions and their interpretation of new settings. The participants' sense of belonging to various communities and groups also influenced the process of their adjustment to and alignment with their new settings in different ways.

Anouk interpreted her new social experience using values and perceptions, based on cultural and social experiences of living in Europe. These values can arguably be attributed to any culture, and include ideas of social justice, vulnerability of disadvantaged people, and a compassionate attitude towards them. Anouk's system of values is fundamental to building her relationships in Australia, and serves as criteria for evaluating people as different or the same. The "mismatch" between her values and views on various issues and the values and views of her local acquaintances underpinned Anouk's positioning of herself as different from local people and distant from them. Most often, she refers to her "European" (not "Dutch") connections when identifying herself in Australian settings, thus positioning herself globally.

For Anouk, the social emerges as a work category, interwoven with her everyday professional world and discussed in terms of social relations and social disadvantage. Her professional engagement becomes a prevailing part of her life, also functioning as a main site for social participation with her colleagues mostly represented as local people. Feeling disengaged with local acquaintances because of not sharing the same values, and having a desire to create a social network, Anouk prefers to maintain connections with her overseas friends.

Though Anouk's narrative accounts progressively reveal signs of a tolerant attitude towards differences, her perception of many aspects of life in Australia, such as marital beliefs and practices, remain unchanged. While eager to "invest" in her professional development and adjust her sense of professional self in accordance with circumstances, Anouk is reluctant to "invest" in building social relations in her new settings, not wanting to compromise her residual sense of social self. This supports the claim by Ryan and Mullholland (2015) that skilled immigrants don't usually maintain equal degrees of embeddedness across various domains of life, and a high level of professional integration might not coincide with the same level of social engagement.

In case of Gabriela, discussions of the themes of employment and lifestyle unveiled shifting priorities on her scale of values. While reporting strong devotion to her professional engagement ("[i]n Brazil I used to work a lot, and in the evenings I stayed in the office"), Gabriela reveals that exposure to new social and work settings became a resource for her changing self-perception in the new country of residence. Her reflective outlook of experiences since arrival in Australia, such as not having enough food, working hard in the unskilled workforce, and being unfairly treated, resulted in a re-evaluation of her previous system of values, made through continuous comparisons between how it was "before" and how it is "now" (a chronotopic "travelling" in time and space, Bakhtin, 1984; Blommaert, 2007). While still considering professional employment as the major issue for successful accommodation in the new settings, Gabriela becomes more flexible with balancing professional and social domains of life: she embraces the Australian lifestyle ("[here] I do more physical activities, yoga, I run, I go to the parks, and have picnics. I like to go to the beach") and enthusiastically engages in establishing social relations and networking with different groups of people: neighbours, colleagues, and employers.

For Gabriela, social networking emerges not only as a strategy to access professional and employment related discourses, but also as a means of social inclusion. In line with Wenger's (1998) argument that speakers of other languages might make the greatest investment in building connections with the people who represent or provide access to the imagined community, Gabriela's investment strategies are motivated by an imagined identity and an imagined future in her desired environment, the field of academia.

Gabriela's references to the "baggage" which she brought with her, meaning different types of resources, reveal her belief in the transportability and transferal of her symbolic capital (Bourdieu, 1986) to the new environment. This is particularly evident in the discourse related to her linguistic capital, when she expresses her perception of English language as a global commodity, her "tool" and "currency", which provides access to a wider world. It appears, however, that her "currency" is not easily convertible into meaningful assets in the new settings, and her social networking strategy did not assist her to connect social and professional domains of life at the level of her desired skilled professional employment. The struggle to negotiate her professional identity and uncertainty in terms of identifying with local settings is reflected in a constant self-perception of being "international", revealing her sense of transnational belonging.

Almafuerta's perception of social and professional reality in Australia is impacted by her sense of belonging to her ethnic community and its cultural values. The notions that she brings in her discourse, such as class, gender, chauvinism, and inequality, arguably derive from her ethnic social and cultural experience. In her narrative accounts, Almafuerta creates boundaries with almost all aspects of Australian life (such as the academic world of Australia and people who represent this domain; social relationships; even ordinary Australians whose faces are "difficult to read"), part of which she wants to become, both socially and professionally. These boundaries are indicative of complex transcultural processes of transition and adequation (Bucholtz & Hall, 2004) that Almafuerta experiences.

Continually juxtaposing her experiences in Australian and Latin American contexts, Almafuerta reveals that she does not entirely associate herself with either setting. She rather positions herself on the boundaries of various settings, and expresses her self-perception through social comparisons with others, that is an element of her process of social identity formation (Tajfel & Turner, 1979). Her recurrent self-identification as an "Argentine" and comparisons between past and present environments demonstrate that she is "reading" new social and professional settings through her cultural and social background, raising issues of the interplay between her ethnic, social, and cultural identities as also identified in the work of Hall (2011), Bucholtz (2004), De Fina (2003), and De Fina and Georgakopoulou (2015).

Almafuerta's desire to get professional employment in the field of academia stimulates her to make adjustments to the new settings: she acquires new communicative styles and resources, such as vernacular polite forms in academic settings; selectively and pragmatically "invests" her time and efforts in building relationships with people from academic backgrounds who, arguably, can provide access to professional employment. She positions herself as an academia "insider", referring to her awareness of "unwritten rules" in academia and describing it as a "small market". However, despite her efforts to attach herself to the desired environment of academia, Almafuerta appears to be unable to fit with the new settings. It emerged that her strong attachment to "original" ethnic values and perception of the world constrained further alignment and participation in this community of practice, marking her association with these potential professional and social settings as an ongoing challenge.

In contrast to Almafuerta's attachment to her previous cultural and social settings, Flavio and Amir are strongly attached to their "previous" sense of professional self rather than to the places where they have lived and worked, or to their original ethnic communities. Though having similar past experiences of working as expatriates overseas, they differ in building and presenting their identities in relation to this experience. Being reflective of his changed status and social self-perception, Amir presents himself as a skilled immigrant, while Flavio attempts to "incorporate" his professional identity as an "expatriate" into the new environment, and doesn't identify himself as a newcomer. In line with his perception that all Australians are immigrants, he relates himself to the overall immigrant population of Australia, not distinguishing between old and new immigrants, and is therefore somewhat bewildered by his present deficit position and a sense of "otherness", not experienced previously.

Though vigorously attempting to sustain and protect his professional and social identity, under the weight of rejections of his job applications, and due to encounters with representatives of the host society and other immigrants, Flavio comes to view himself less as an expatriate and more as a migrant of lower status. This view reflects Blommaert's (2005) observation that social identities may not be convertible to an equivalent class identity during transition into new settings.

While pointing to his friendly reception by Australians in social contexts, Amir expresses concern regarding his “matching” the new environment. His sense of otherness is reflected in his discussion of perceived “strange” and “weird” behaviours of new immigrants, with whom he associates himself. While expressing an opinion of how Australians may view immigrants, Amir simultaneously evaluates and re-evaluates his previous experiences. It seems that he is overwhelmed by impressions drawn from immersion in his new social settings, which overrule his primary social self and home culture. In this sense, he “abandons” his existing social self and he seeks to convert his existing cultural capital into a new “currency” by embracing the new social order and adopting a conventional Anglo-Saxon name instead of his Iranian name. By changing his name Amir reveals his desire to associate himself with the new settings, lessen his sense of otherness, and become more native-like.

As a sense of belonging to their professional group emerges as a dominant factor shaping Amir’s and Flavio’s self-presentation and identity, they both vigorously seek professional employment in their field. It is argued that for most adult immigrants, the “workplace is their main social gateway into a new society” (Remennick, 2013, p. 156). This is explicitly consistent with Flavio’s anticipations of considering his prospective employment in a familiar environment as a pathway to social participation that conforms to his expectations. However, in the case of Amir, seeking social inclusion in the new settings through professional engagement is not an obvious strategy, as he clearly differentiates relations between social activities and a professional domain of life. Pointing to his overall positive social experience in Australian contexts, Amir argues that “working is going to be more serious” and “harsh”. His narratives of projected difficulties in building working relations with future colleagues reveal that he is concerned about fitting in with the Australian professional landscape.

According to the statistical data, Australians without Anglo-Saxon names have to send up to two-thirds more job applications to get a job interview (Australian Human Rights commission, 2014, cited in Healey, 2016). In this sense, Amir’s new name seems to be a strategy to enhance his chances. Amir’s response is quite radical in that his new name is a move towards a socialised identity in all areas of activity,

while all participants in the study are seeking a socialised identity either in their profession or new social world.

6.2.3 Conclusion

The participants' discussion of the construct "Australia as a land of migrants" not only disclosed their different views on what constitutes this construct, but revealed their positions in relation to this mainstream discourse. For the majority of them, there was a mismatch between their expectations and reality of living in the new country of their residence. Having anticipations of being positively received and accommodated here, both professionally and socially, according to their perceptions of Australia requiring their skills and expertise, all the participants experienced reported unofficial underestimation, misjudgement or downgrading of their overseas qualifications, work experience, English language skills, and overall abilities, struggling to accommodate themselves professionally and suitably position themselves socially. Their discourse discloses multiple reported contradictions of aspects of multicultural policies, such as biased and unequal treatment on the grounds of education, professional and English language skills, raising questions about skilled immigration policies and worthiness of their regulatory requirements in practice.

The discussion of the participants' expectations prior to immigration and their experience of unemployment, search for a job, and involvement in social interactions revealed to what extent the process of their social and professional adaptation to the new settings was connected to and hindered by their anticipations. It became evident that misperception of some aspects of the new environment led to the tense and stressful experience of re-negotiation and re-consideration of layers of identity, which were initially presented and considered by some participants as intact and stable, but under the weight of new experiences, however, had to be adjusted and modulated. All adjustments made by participants evidence that they are in the process of re-considering their senses of self against new sets of circumstances, with shifts towards becoming a less different "other" and more "native-like".

While struggling with their "local" self-identifications, all participants were more certain in positioning themselves globally, translocally (Flavio and Amir: "engineers" as a transnational category, Almafuerta: "erudite", Gabriela: "international", Anouk:

“European”). It appears that their appeal to their “global” identities was a compensatory strategy to “identify” and present themselves while having difficulties with positioning and self-identification in the local settings. This also emerged as a means to connect themselves to their “previous” or desired selves and environments.

It is argued that different levels of participants’ attachment to their previous environment and its values variously impacted on the process of adaptation to the new settings, constraining or compelling adjustment to the new environment and its professional and social life. It emerges that embracing or just simply endorsing the Australian social order and a desire to be affiliated with it arguably assisted skilled immigrants to maintain a positive stance towards their prospects here, making the process of adjustments to their sense of self and social adaptation to the new settings a less traumatic and stressful experience. The participants’ attitudes towards their new environment corresponded with degrees of alignment when positioning themselves in relation to locals, from high levels of a desired, though not unproblematic, affiliation with them (Amir and Gabriela), to a relatively weak level of affiliation (Anouk and Flavio), or even reported adverse attitudes towards such affiliation (Almafuerta). It is noteworthy that these different levels of affiliation with locals reversely corresponded with participants’ levels of attachment to their previous settings.

The characteristic feature of all participants’ discourses was the interconnectedness of social and professional domains of life. Though revealed differently, their imagined and real professional experience and interactions were projected through their social experience and social relations. The discussion of self-perceptions often took place through their perceptions of others, including representatives of the host society, other immigrants, and refugees. While being eager to participate in the professional workforce, not all participants expressed the same willingness to fully join the new social environment. It becomes evident that social and cultural investments may not parallel professional investments, though all are needed.

6.3 Discursive construction of the participants’ identity

While the experiences of skilled immigrants vary significantly depending on their cultural, linguistic, and professional backgrounds, it is argued that they share a

mutual and fundamental value of professional and social participation. It emerges that in the case of skilled immigrants, their desired social configuration is their professional environment, entry and fitting in to which they have to negotiate. In order to achieve access to skilled employment in the new settings, the participants in the investigated cases attempted to align known and new social and professional practices and linguistic resources to gain recognition, acceptance, and agreement.

As Blommaert (2005) argues that linguistic and communicative resources are used in terms of functional adequacy, it raises the question of what communicative practices mediate processes of resettlement (cf Pahl, 2008), and the search for professional and social participation. To be able to communicate effectively and achieve their objectives, the participants had to create recognisable register structures for themselves and others, by schematising and interpreting structurally different social and linguistic organisation of their new culture. It is argued here that this process of schematisation and interpretation of different resources was also reflected in the form, content, and performance of participants' narrative accounts, which are examined further below.

The most distinguished linguistic and communication means, used by all the participants in the study as mediators of the process of their social and professional engagement and identity work, included the time-space construct (chronotope) and ventriloquation (as double-voicing, direct/indirect reported speech/self-reported direct speech, and indexicals). While those means are used by all participants, different constructs are more dominant for different participants of the study.

6.3.1 Borrowing, appropriating, and interpreting resources

It is argued that in their narrative accounts, skilled immigrants in the study attempted to construct structures and generic forms through purposely borrowing, appropriating, and interpreting (Slembrouck, 2011, p. 160) linguistic structures and resources existing in the target community. Borrowing, appropriating, approaching, and interpreting new structures and practices differently, they demonstrated a desire to adopt these new structures in order to achieve their professional goals. At the same time, it was evident that participants' cultural and social capital significantly

impacted on the processes of their analysis and schematisation of new social and cultural structures. This process is particularly manifest in Almafuerta's and Anouk's cases, and appears to be directly connected to processes of self-identifications.

Being engaged in different practices and affiliated with various groupings and communities of practice, both Almafuerta and Anouk had an exposure to the linguistic resources and practices of their target professional environment (an academic field, for Almafuerta; professional workforce, for Anouk). Almafuerta's interpretation and borrowing of the structures of the new cultural environment is reflected in the discussion of her English language and the world of Australian academia. To communicate effectively in the world of academia in Australia, in general, and with her university supervisors, in particular, Almafuerta had to acquire local pragmatic resources, such as a "polite" vernacular communicative style, which is illustrated in the following extract:

I found, especially in academia, you don't make direct questions [sic] You won't get an answer because it's too direct or rude. You will say: "I will appreciate if we may/or if we can/if we could meet tomorrow at some/or what would be preferable for you, or would be convenient" ah - the whole/just to ask for one thing you have to think, you know, how to say, you know, in indirect way (Int. 1).

Although accepting these vernacular norms of communication in order to affiliate with a social grouping, Almafuerta experienced difficulties in accepting these norms as her own. Her ironic and even sarcastic stance in relation to application of these norms of communication ("every time I have to write them [supervisors] to make a request ... I have to think how can I say it without saying it"), laughter, non-verbal applauding, and her characterisation of people of academia ("anti-social"; "actors"; "[they have] monologue about themselves") expresses strong disapproval of these practices, as they contradict the practices of her home environment.

Anouk's interpretation of new professional and cultural practices revolves around her insufficient knowledge of the specific professional registers in her workplace. Her detailed recurrent discussion of the process of acquiring and borrowing colleagues' professional terminology, genre, and communication style reveals her diminished sense of professional self (reflected in expressions like "never good enough"; "doubt myself", "can't express yourself on paper in the way I want to"),

and her struggle and desire to regain her professional confidence, which she directly connected to the mastery of a professional register and writing genre. Over time, her discourse shifted to reflect a gradual sense of inclusion, professional development and value. Her social engagement, however, mismatches her professional involvement, as her recognition of some new social practices appeared to be less progressive and desirable than accumulation of new professional resources.

To sum up, both cases demonstrated that skilled immigrants' preferences in borrowing, accumulating, interpreting, and schematising new linguistic resources and practices depended on their pragmatic goals, connected to their professional establishment and development in the new settings. Being eager to present and position themselves as professionals, and maintain their own "voice" in new professional and social environments, they purposely accumulate and use new formal and informal resources, which assist them in this process, even while projecting an ironic attitude towards these practices and experiencing challenges and difficulties during the process of gathering these resources.

6.3.2 Chronotope: travelling in time and space

What emerges from analysis of all cases, is that the concepts of time and space become one of the critical dimensions in skilled migrants' accommodation in the new country. Time serves as a means to make sense of the new experience, which has to be analysed, construed, and acquired. The travelling in space, with the purpose of connecting various locations, contexts, events, discourses, and "voices" from previous, present, and projected conversations, functions as a powerful tool to construct and negotiate the sense of self in the conditions, where the real relocation in space took place, as in the case with immigration. In this sense, the concept of chronotope and time-space relations become a form of discourse, structuring time and place in relation to narrative identity. The fusion of coordinates of time, place and identity is most evident in the longer accounts of all participants, when the flow of interviews changed from the format of "question-answer" to narratives containing chronotopic time-space dimensions, not only in relation to recounting experiences, but also "link(ing) to a necessary future" (Bakhtin, 1986, p. 36).

Multifunctionality of purposes of application of the time-space construct is revealed in the narrative accounts of study participants in different ways. Almafuerta's expansive time-space movements are characteristic in involving multiple dimensions of chronotopic travelling. Her use of time-space scales and their strategic application across various contexts serve as a means in aligning her with her new environment; reconceptualising and re-evaluating her previous experiences, also bringing order and meaning to her life in her new country of residence. Her references to different geographic sites, where she had lived and studied, as well as to the social and cultural margins provide her with different types of cultural capital, also revealing the "embeddedness" of her sense of self in her previous experiences. Her "layered" identity is constructed by means of layering places and times, while "building" a profile of a well-educated, status seeking professional.

The referential aspects of what can be called a "geography of the self" in Almafuerta's case emerge as identity shaping forces, hence references to these forces are references to the parts of the process that makes up the self. For Almafuerta, this is a process that remains under construction, as her participation in a new community is not one of integration, but of identity accumulation. Chronotopic references to her experiences, which she brings into her narrative accounts, provide multiple insertion points in the discourse – multiple points of identification where her biography becomes an "itinerary" (Feld, 1996, p. 113). The practice of referring to the geographical, social and cultural spaces assists Almafuerta in constructing and negotiating her identity as a global, international category.

In discussions of immigration, the dimensions of time and space make identity "visible", and help the narrators track themselves, and reflecting the processes they experience. Amir's "activation" and comparison of different contexts in discussing social and cultural features of the environments, previous and current, reveal the transitional stage of his adjustment to Australian social and cultural settings. Framed by multiple evaluative indexicals, these comparisons not only assist him in construction and presentation of his positive self-perception "here" and "now", but also demonstrate the diminishing value of his social ties with his past.

A time-space construct is used by Amir during the construction and presentation of his professional self. References to his overseas working experience in different

countries, evaluative indexicals in his description of his professional standing (“I was a good engineer”; “progressed to the project manager”), his profession (“that’s a science”), and his belonging to a transnational profession not only function as a means to present himself as a highly skilled professional. They also assist Amir in building an argument of the universal value of his cultural and professional capital, brought with him to his new setting. These examples demonstrate how the purposeful selective application of chronotope contributes to the construction of various aspects of self according to the narrator’s goals, also connecting local discussion to macro discourses.

Gabriela’s use of the construct of time-space is highly visible in her reports on her changed system of social values. The critical experiences she underwent in Australia led to re-evaluation of her values, and she analyses and presents this process through comparison of how it is now and how it was before. Her continual “international movements” from her current country of residence to her previous home and working environment disclose different levels of scales, both local and translocal, which she brings into her discourse through the use of the constructs of time and space. Her recurrent references to opposite categories “local-international” in defining both herself and others signal her desire to construct and present her identity as belonging to the new settings and being “international” at the same time.

Anouk’s time-space “travelling” not only reveals her strong ties with her previous social life, but shows her desire to sustain these ties. The use of the time-space construct allows her to maintain a sense of connection with her overseas social network and family in her home country, while also contributing to a process of painful comparisons of her previous professional achievements with her current professional standing. Progressively activating and evaluating various past and present social and professional contexts, Anouk attempts to monitor and analyse the dynamics of her self-perceptions in different domains of life. It is argued that her professional employment in a month after arrival in Australia did not allow her time to gain impressions and potentially acquire aspects of the different social order and practices of her new country of residence, forcing her to confront the values of local acquaintances as “not her own”. Her gradual immersion into the new social settings arguably moderates Anouk’s criticism of some of its features, assisting her in building a more tolerant attitude to local social life and her participation in it.

Anouk's reported experience coincides with Amir's observation regarding PhD study as a means to gradually become familiar with the local settings and "slowly find your way into community". In line with their perceptions is Almafuerta's experience acquired in her new residence – her "new vision" of the world as a broader, diversified category; such "acquisitions" also required time. Gabriela's re-evaluation of her system of personal values also occurred after a series of life changing events, which she experienced during the period of her residence in Australia. While the experiences of all participants in the study showed the necessity of various adjustments to the new environment, the recognition of such adjustments and the application of strategies to achieve it, including identity work to "agree" with these adjustments, also needed time. This component of time in the context of immigration, therefore, becomes a significant issue on its own, needed by skilled immigrants to transition into a new environment. It is evident, however, that the time of resettlement when skilled immigrants are pushed to address their practical everyday needs, sometimes by taking unqualified and low-skilled jobs, becomes a challenging period for their identities, and requires skilled immigrants to maintain a positive outlook of themselves as skilled and well-educated professionals when an accumulation of a working class identity takes place.

The concept of space in the modern world, in contrast to the concept of time, becomes expanded and literally unlimited for skilled professionals, as in the context of this study, and worldwide. The opportunities and experience of working in different countries provide them with various cultural and linguistic resources, which shape their self-perceptions and self-presentations. It was evident that the process of relocation to another country was not considered by the participants as a life changing experience. Facing unforeseen circumstances and experiencing critical processes of renegotiation of identities, some immigrants might consider a return to their previous locations in order to regain previous identities (for example, as in the cases with Flavio and Anouk). It emerged that the hypothetical possibility of such an option served as a means to ease threats to identities.

It can be concluded that the narratives of immigration (revealing and discussing the processes of people's transition and adjustment to new environments) are often constructed by means of time-space related discourse, which reflect chronotopic relations between different contexts and circumstances. In this respect, the

chronotope, as a mode of representation, serves multiple purposes: as a strategy to establish and present a desired identity; as a means to express an alignment or misalignment with particular settings; as a connection between various environments; as a method of analysis of self-perceptions; and as a means to connect local and global discourses. Applied differently by the participants in the study, in accordance with their individual purposes, the time-space representations, which connect and blend various places, voices, contexts, events, and circumstances emerge as useful tools in skilled immigrants' construction and presentation of a sense of self.

6.3.2 Ventriloquation: voices of "others" as a means for self-presentations

Another characteristic discursive feature for all participants in the study was the process of ventriloquation, presented as double-voicing, reported and self-reported speech. As social and professional identities of skilled migrants were engaged in an ongoing process of construction in relation to environments both past, present, and projected, they were infused by voices from the past and in situ (Pavlenko & Lantolf, 2000, p. 171). It is argued that in the process of self-identification and negotiation of identity, the mechanism of indexed and ventriloquated voices (Bakhtin, 1984) allows for constructing and reconstructing positions through projections of relationships with these voices into the new contexts. These recontextualised voices, accompanied by indexicals, arguably assisted the participants in the study to achieve their objectives and purposes when describing their circumstances as new skilled immigrants to Australia.

Flavio's use of ventriloquation is particularly illustrative in showing the extent of application of this strategy in identity presentation. Using the voices of others, Flavio "relocates" himself, employing ventriloquation as a means for a discursive construction of his experiences in various coordinates of time and space. In his desire to establish parity between his present and past, he attempts to bring his past experiences and previous professional and social self-perceptions into the present, arguing for an immediate transportability of his skills and entire qualities into the new settings. Previous habitations are introduced by him as interpretive material

contexts evidencing the possibility of such transportation, and the direct and indirect reported speech of others (his previous employers, in particular) is intended to support and intensify his self-presentation. Flavio's construction of the self in a ventriloquated narrative assists him to construct particular forms of social participation while mediating the process of pursuing workforce involvement.

Anouk's reported appropriation of the voices of others in her professional context also becomes a means for constructing professional and social participation, and serves as a resource for re-negotiation of her professional self. While it is argued that a process of self-translation for second language learners, engaging with new linguistic environments, is mediated by the appropriation of other voices (Pavlenko & Lantolf, 2000, pp. 163-167), it appears that it is not just a process of appropriation of other voices that assists in construction a sense of self in the new settings. It is rather through negotiation and maintaining a correlation across different voices (including the voice of the speaker) that the process of re-negotiation of self takes place. In this sense, ventriloquation emerges as a mode of personal, social, and professional regulation, where different dimensions of one's identity are enacted through a process of employing other voices. Flavio's, Amir's, and Anouk's ventriloquated accounts show that in respect of the skilled immigrant experience, this form of transnational discourse also functions as a resource for social adaptation and access to membership of professional and social groups.

As a mode of performance, moments of ventriloquation provide insight into the local and transnational construction of skilled immigrants' social and economic participation or absence thereof. In order to adjust to different types of social and professional discourse to achieve a "cultural fit", skilled immigrants purposely draw upon previous worlds and voices to "populate" their new professional and social worlds, also expressing their stance in relation to the previous and new environments, using evaluative indexicals. In this respect, ventriloquation functions as an accommodative strategy, connecting various contexts and allowing skilled immigrants to deal with the present.

It emerges, however, that a key effect of ventriloquation is to present and bring forward a multi-dimensional sense of self in the performance of the experience of relocation and resettlement. This is particularly evident in Anouk's and Gabriela's

multiple use of self-reported speech in their narrative accounts. Emergent as strong identity markers, these “insertions” of self in their story worlds (reports) and in performance of these reports (story-telling behaviour) are indicative of the process of examination and negotiation of their new experiences through self-reflections, and in comparison with previous selves. Attempting to construct “voices” in the new settings, they verbalise and present self-perceptions often in opposition to the circumstances, which impact on these self-perceptions.

In the process of identity negotiation, ventriloquation emerges also as a particular communication strategy in moments, where otherness is perceived to be a problem. This is particularly manifest in Flavio’s and Gabriela’s references to the reported voices of different people in situations when their self-perceptions contradicted how they were perceived in the new settings. In order to protect a sense of self in conditions when professional capabilities were not immediately acknowledged, Flavio used the reported direct speech of his former employers to portray a positive image of himself as a professional. In her turn, Gabriela created a contrast between her self-perception as transnational and positioning herself globally, and the reported voices of her potential employers, calling her “international” in a negative connotation of this term, as unsuitable for an advertised vacancy. Though employed differently, the voices of others assisted the participants in the study to construct and present a desired image of themselves.

6.3.3 Conclusion

Though it is argued that representatives of different cultural and linguistic backgrounds use different cultural and linguistic resources in their discursive self-presentation and storytelling performance (De Fina & Georgakopoulou, 2012, p. 64; Bauman, 1986), some linguistic choices appear across all the cases in the study. Amongst these linguistic means, the process of chronotopic reference with its time-space scales, and the process of ventriloquation, were the most distinguished features, used by participants.

The concept of chronotope and time-space representation emerged as a form of discourse, connecting participants’ previous and present experiences, showing an

embeddedness of their perception of reality and current self-perceptions in previous lives and environments. Thus, the process of chronotopic representation assisted speakers to narratively create what Holquist (1990) described as “a pattern of development in the biography” (p. 108). It is argued here that the construction of such development and continuity is particularly necessary in the case of immigration, which often causes discontinuity between the past and present lives of people who undertake it. Employing time-space discourse, the participants in the study discussed and reflected on the processes and changes they experienced during the transition to new professional and social settings, while also narratively constructing and presenting their new layered identities.

As identity claims are enacted and embodied through a variety of linguistic and non-linguistic modes, the discourse of ventriloquation emerged as a key means of performance, employed by all participants in the study. Permitting speakers to position themselves and their interlocutors with respect to others’ voices by not speaking directly in their own voices (Wortham, 2001, p. 67), ventriloquation “brought” into discourse additional conversational partners, with their voices from beyond the immediate interaction with the researcher. Ventriloquation not only functioned as an accommodative and communicative strategy and as a means to negotiate a sense of self in the new settings, but it connected the immediate discourse with a larger frame of globalised issues and social processes. It is argued that in times of temporal professional and social relocation, as evidenced in these accounts of immigration and resettlement, such processes are mediated by chronotopic and ventriloquated discourse contributing cross-cultural voices during this period of transition into new cultural and social settings.

CHAPTER 7: CONCLUSION

Introduction

The conclusion of this study is focussed on the summary of the identity developments, accompanying the process of professional and social accommodation of skilled immigrants from non-English language backgrounds in Australia. Various factors, impacted on the process of participants' construction and presentation of self in the new settings were also examined, alongside the strategies applied by participants in the study in order to adapt socially and professionally to the environment of their new country of residence.

While there is a growing body of work regarding the issue of construction and presentation of second or additional language identities of adults in the context of immigration, the majority of identity-focused studies examined this question in formal learning environments (Norton & McKinney, 2011). The aim of this research was to examine the process of skilled immigrants' identity construction and representation outside of the classroom. For the majority of the participants in the study, this process coincided either with their intense search for professional employment, or with the application of strategies, intended to lead to professional employment at a later stage.

This chapter addresses the research questions, which were explored during the study, followed by a discussion of the contribution of this research, as well as its limitations, implications, and recommendations for future research.

7.1 Research questions

The central question of the study was:

What processes of self-definition and redefinition of identity do skilled immigrants experience in the period of re-settlement?

In relation to the central question, three sub-questions were formulated, which were intended to clarify and provide a more detailed examination of the central question from a socio-linguistic perspective, while also examining participants' approaches to their

accommodation in the new country in accordance with the processes they experienced. These sub-questions were:

1. How do skilled immigrants draw on social and personal linguistic resources in the construction and presentation of their identities?
2. What factors, emerging from the participants' narratives, shape both the process of construction and negotiation of their identities, and the overall process of their accommodation in the new country?
3. What strategies do skilled migrants employ to adapt to new professional, social, and cultural settings?

Through the use of thematic analysis, followed by a social interactional approach to the analysis of participants' narratives, a detailed case-by-case analysis was conducted. Each case then contributed to a cross-case examination for emergent similarities and variances. By interpreting the data, in relation to Sub-question 1, related to the *social and personal linguistic resources, which skilled immigrants used in construction and presentation of their identities*, it was found that participants were able to create structures for self-expression and self-presentation through "activation" and employment of cross-cultural resources. Their reported accumulation of new communicative genres and styles, learning of new academic and workplace practices, which they pragmatically integrated into their repertoire of social and linguistic resources, arguably assisted them to reconstruct their "migrant" voice. In conditions of transnationally distinct social, professional and linguistic environments, the skilled immigrants in the study created structures and generic forms through borrowing, appropriating, and interpreting target community societal structures in order to achieve their goals and negotiate their identities while being engaged in different practices and affiliated with various groupings.

Being "outsiders" in relation to the culture of the new environment and workforce, participants applied available cultural and social capital to connect and "bridge" previous and present settings and experiences. This chronotopic process of a time-space travelling was often brought to life through processes of ventriloquation and

double-voicing, involving the invocation of voices of others from other settings. These strategies emerged as a major discursive means, common to all participants in the study, by which new identities were performed. Though applied differently, these linguistic means assisted participants to construct and present their identities while representing their circumstances as new immigrants in Australia.

With skilled immigrants' capacities in the target language, professional knowledge, and career investments built up and valued in other contexts, professional engagement in the new setting emerged as a major goal for all participants. Underpinned by perceptions of the receiving society as a country of immigrants where skilled immigrants were in high demand, participants maintained anticipations about the transportability and applicability of their professional skills. In the face of significant difficulties in gaining employment and professional acceptance in their fields of expertise, participants experienced various moments of self-definition and redefinition of their senses of identities, with the dimension of professional identity most affected.

The analysis of other *factors, which shaped the process of participants' construction and negotiation of their identities, and an overall process of their accommodation in the new country* (Sub-question 2) revealed that a mismatch between participants' employment expectations and the reality of unemployment negatively affected their sense of professional self. Accommodation in the new setting was also influenced by a tension between their self-perceptions and the perceived attitude of others towards them. Considering themselves as successful intelligent professionals, participants experienced various degrees of being personally undervalued, including devaluing of their educational credentials, in the context of a sense of diminished professional self. The tension between how they perceived themselves and how they were perceived by others arguably prompted participants to look for ways that would assist them to regain their agency and renegotiate their sense of self from a different position. This included taking up activities designed to improve their English language skills, adopting an Anglo-Saxon name, and undertaking higher degree studies in the new context. All these activities were aimed to align the participants' sense of selves more closely with the social, cultural, and professional tenor of local expectations. Participants often employed the strategy of positioning themselves globally and translocally, which operated as a compensatory strategy to re-identify

and locate themselves in the context of the perceived language and cultural differences when feeling undervalued.

“Going back” in order to “go forward” was a common strategy employed by skilled immigrants in the study, not just for the construction of their identities in the interviews, but in support of the reported representation of their identity adjustments in new professional settings, showing various levels of attachment to pre-existing professional selves. This process evidenced the historical embedding of the sense of self, which not only emerged as a result of momentary interaction with the researcher, but was strongly tied to current and previous experiences and circumstances. For those participants, whose previous professional selves were dominant points of reference in constructing a sense of professional self in the new environment, accommodation work consisted of protecting, reconstructing, and reclaiming their previously confident but currently threatened or weakened professional identities. For other participants in the study, who demonstrated lesser levels of attachment to a sense of a previous professional self, the desire to retain the status of well-educated individuals who could perform skilled work appeared to be more important. High levels of determination to retain their status as skilled and well educated professionals were evident in all participants’ cases, and alongside the desire to occupy a relevant professional niche in the new environment, these factors appeared as the shaping forces of skilled immigrants’ identities in new conditions.

In order to achieve their goals, all participants needed to reconsider their perception of self and reality in accordance with the new experiences. It emerged that the nature of skilled immigrants’ professions was an important factor impacting on the process of renegotiation of professional selves. Professions, strongly connected to a particular language and cultural workforce, such as journalism, required high levels of modification to a sense of professional self in the new settings, forcing the skilled immigrants with such qualifications to consider alternative or significantly adjusted professional pathways. On the other hand, participants with so-called culturally neutral professions, such as engineering, who initially expressed a belief in the universal nature of their profession, also came to reconsider their misconceptions regarding seamless transportability of their professional skills in the new workforce. As the result of such reconsideration, four out of five participants in the study employed the strategy of seeking to commence careers in Australia from a lower

position than the one they achieved in their countries of origin. This lower level start, considered by participants as a means to adapt to workplace practices and cultures and contextually relevant English language, demonstrated the reduced mobility of skilled immigrants' skills, as well as the level of adjustments, being made to their professional selves.

It was noticeable that a reflective outlook in the new circumstances, though highlighting tensions in self-perceptions, stimulated participants' analysis of requirements and specifics of the new settings, and consequently prompted their work on adjustments to the new environment more resourcefully and strategically. In this sense, reflexivity emerged as an accommodative strategy, which assisted some skilled immigrants to analyse their self-perceptions, self-definitions and redefinitions during the process of adaptation to the new settings. Though not all skilled immigrants in the study demonstrated high levels of readiness for reflective renegotiation of their self-perceptions and willingness to take a different look at themselves in new conditions, under the weight of new experiences all participants recognised the necessity to modify and reconsider some of their viewpoints and beliefs, thus accelerating the process of their alignment with the new settings.

It is argued that different levels of participants' attachment to their previous environment and its values variously impacted on the process of adaptation to the new settings. It was evident that strong ties with local ethnic communities and home environments sometimes became factors constraining and hindering the process of participants' adjustment to the new environment and its professional and social life. By contrast, embracing Australian social settings and a desire to be affiliated with locals arguably assisted skilled immigrants to maintain a positive stance towards their prospects, making the process of adjustment to their identities and social adaptation to the new settings a less traumatic and stressful experience. Despite different reported levels of affiliation with the local settings and locals, all participants demonstrated movements towards such affiliation, seeking both professional and social participation.

All adjustments made by the participants in the study evidenced that they were re-considering their senses of selves in new circumstances, with some adjustments shifting them towards becoming more native-like. As it is argued that competent

participation in all domains of life requires access to different discourses, the issue of language skills was crucial in seeking such participation. In this respect, the theme of deficiency of English language skills in the professional and, sometimes, the social contexts, and work done on its improvement, discussed by all participants in the study, revealed their desire to get access to social and professional discourses, and, therefore, to full membership of the new society. It was evident that immigrants' perceptions of their English skills constructed individual barriers and at the same time was a stimulus to professional and social adaptation prompting them to find the ways to improve their knowledge of the target language. For participants in the study, the adjustments to their second or third language appeared as an essential part of the process of changes required for professional and social acceptance and well-being.

In the pursuit of their professional and social goals, participants gathered and accumulated new resources, such as additional qualifications, higher degrees, new registers of English language, new communicative styles (such as vernacular, polite forms), and modes of behaviour. In this respect, the third Sub-question, concerned with *the strategies, which participants employed to adapt to new professional, social, and cultural environments*, revealed that various forms of investment, applied either in relation to further education (including learning English language) or in building social networks functioned as a major accommodative strategy. It was evident, however, that not all types of investments were successful in leading to the anticipated outcome, thus forcing participants to change or modify their investment strategies, for example, switching from investing in establishing a social network to the pursuit of a higher degree, and the reverse.

It is argued that the process of selecting types of investments accompanied and reflected processes of identity modulations, which participants experienced. Thus, the reluctance of one of the participants to make any sort of investments demonstrated his initial hesitation in making any adjustments to his sense of professional and social self. For some participants, investment made in the professional domain of life, did not always parallel social investments, revealing an as yet unresolved tension between their professional and social selves. Though the data revealed interconnectedness of professional and social lives of skilled immigrants, and their social identities often emerged in the discussion of their real or projected professional selves, it was evident that a fundamental value for skilled

immigrants in the study was seeking to maintain a sense of participation and professional identity. This is why their investments in professional development often prevailed over investments in social life, though all were needed for their well-being in the new environment.

The discussion of the sub-questions can be summarised to answer the *central research question regarding the processes of definition and redefinition, which skilled immigrants in the study experienced during the time of their settlement in Australia*, it appears that all participants sought to position themselves as highly educated and skilled professionals and individuals. It emerged, however, that they all experienced various degrees of decreasing confidence, uncertainty in their professional capabilities, which resulted in different levels of anxiety and adjustments to their identities, while attempting to protect and sustain their sense of selves. The participants' struggle for professional and social recognition and participation emerged as a major force for modifications and adjustments made to their sense of selves. The identity work emergent in their narrative accounts reveals a transformation of their self-perceptions during the negotiation of their real or imagined professional and social participation. Characteristic for all participants was their desire to regain equal or similar professional positioning achieved in previous countries of their residence, including equivalent social standing and financial prospects associated with their professional statuses.

For some participants, the experience of immigration resulted in re-evaluation of not just their professional positioning and professional goals, but of their systems of social values and preferences in life shifting to a more relaxed and social-focussed style. It emerged, however, that, even for these participants, their professional engagement and development remained the main concern and a goal which they aimed to fulfil, supporting the idea that, for the category of skilled immigrants, professional and social participation is at the heart of the enterprise.

7.1.1 Identity in the context of policies

As this study is focussed on discourse in the context of immigration, it raises questions about immigration policies, philosophies, and the culture of immigrant settlement which also frame this process. It has been argued that in late modernity the nation-state is becoming less of a factor in the determination of people's identities, networks, and practices (Blommaert, 2005, p. 217), meaning that globalisation, with its transnational and transidiomatic linguistic and cultural processes, is introducing and establishing new norms and models of people's relationships with places, spaces, social and cultural institutions, and other people. The principles of multilingualism and multiculturalism emerge as norms of these new relations, arguably allowing for negotiation and management of identities in intercultural communication.

From these perspectives, it seems as a demand of the time, that conceptions of human capital and national development strategies worldwide has taken "a new emphasis on accessing global economic networks by identifying and mobilizing citizens who have multiple affiliations" (Larner, 2007, p. 332). It emerges, however, that in reality these conceptions are impacted by many developing factors, both political, social, and economic, which make the process of globalisation less global and less inclusive. Amongst these factors are: political and security concerns after terrorist attacks across the world (Akbari & MacDonald, 2014); the rise of Islamophobia and nationalists attitude towards some ethnic groups (e.g. Muslims and Middle Eastern immigrants and refugees), making these groups less or not at all welcomed (Castles, 2016); "unwanted" forms of immigration, such as asylum seekers and family visa applicants whose economic contribution is less noticeable than skilled immigrants' (Wright, 2015, p. 319); and various local institutional, ideological, cultural, and political considerations of policymakers and lobbyist groups (Wright, 2015). These factors contribute to recent political processes and shifts in policies in many countries worldwide, amongst which are Brexit in the UK, and immigration bans in the USA, which restrict people's movements and limit their access to global market opportunities.

It appears, however, that highly skilled constituents of the process of global migration accelerate and advance (Akbari & MacDonald, 2014; Castles, 2016). In Australia, skilled immigration has become and remains one of the key elements for current and future economic development (Birrell & Healy, 2013). Walsh (2014) argues that Australia is seeking to advance its interests “by capitalising on migrants’ transnational connections” (p. 296). Skilled immigrants with their international work experience and different types of cultural and social capital seem to be a most valuable asset for such capitalisation. However, the skilled immigrants’ in the present study revealed that they were not considered as such in the host society, despite reflecting the assumptions and tenets of the globalisation ideology in their narratives.

It was evident that the government policies that regulate immigration, as well as authorities, employers, and recruiters are significant factors, impacting on people’s identities. Formally recognised as having “internalised market values” (Walsh, 2014, p. 289), these highly skilled independent immigrants from non-English speaking backgrounds experienced turbulent renegotiation of their professional and social identities, as their professional credentials and work experience did not immediately translate into genuine on-the-ground recognition. Their English language skills, though confirmed by testing and believed to be high enough to secure employment, were often considered by the participants in the study and potential employers as not substantial enough to meet communication requirements in specific professional settings. All these factors not only resulted in modifications to the skilled immigrants’ sense of selves, but functioned as limitations to their transition in the new professional environment.

While the prevailing economic impetus for skilled immigration appears to coincide with skilled immigrants’ objectives, multiple obstacles to their professional accommodation in the new settings reduce the expected economic benefits for which skilled immigration has been invited. If the goal of skilled immigrant economic transition is their professional participation, then it is argued here that such a goal is achievable by affording access to appropriate professional settings and contexts, providing the interactional dynamics to mediate and perform professional identities and opportunities.

Focussing exclusively on economic purposes and the aims of economic rationalism, without taking into account immigrants' material and symbolic interests – their cultural and social capital, does not correspond with realities of the globalised world and the changing character of international migration. Considering diverse and changing motivations for immigration, economic reasons alone are not necessarily dominating people's decisions and plans (Akbari & MacDonald, 2014). While the Australian model of immigration and multiculturalism was arguably highly successful (Healy, 2016), it is argued that it is necessary to develop a new model of transnational citizenship, with new modes of equity and inclusion (Castles, 2016, p. 397). It is desirable that this new model addresses not only the issues of skilled immigrants' professional and social participation, but that it also take into consideration people's diverse life trajectories, attachments, inspirations, and opportunities.

7. 2 Contribution to the knowledge

The present study is significant in making a contribution to the literature, theory, practice and policy related to modern issues of skilled immigration. In relation to the literature, the study contributes to knowledge about adaptation of skilled immigrants from NESBs in a modern English-speaking country. Specifically, it adds to an understanding of the processes that skilled immigrants from NESBs undergo during the period of transition to the new country of their residence, Australia, and how these processes impact on their self-perceptions in new professional and social settings. Unveiling the experiences of the skilled immigrants in the study, as well as their priorities, goals, and concerns extends to new understandings of the process of their adjustments and adaptation to new cultural, social, and professional environments.

Theoretically, the study adds to the conceptual understanding of the ways that adult immigrants take up new discourses and redefine existing ones as part of the process of construction and presentation of their identities in an additional language (Baynham, 2011; Block, 2007; Clarke, 2008; Darvin & Norton, 2015; De Fina & Georgakopoulou 2012, 2015; Norton, 2000). Examination of skilled immigrants' linguistic resources and communication strategies, contributes to knowledge of skilled immigrants' identity

construction, particularly in the area of negotiating professional and social recognition, and participation, an area of ongoing research (Norton & McKinney, 2011).

In practical terms, the study outlines a number of important factors which are needed for skilled immigrants to reach a level of affiliation and alignment with their new environment. It demonstrates that the processes of skilled immigrants' adjustment and adaptation include different modifications to their senses of self, as well as to their perceptions of reality, and to their accommodative strategies. Thus, this study extends the growing body of knowledge on skilled immigrants' adaptation strategies, particularly various forms of adjustments and investments in different domains of life employed in order to professionally and socially position and accommodate themselves in accordance with their self-perceptions in the new environment.

Finally, the study provides insights into the interconnectedness of the processes of skilled immigrant's adaptation and adjustment to life in Australia as their destination country, and the wider societal and cultural milieus projected in the policies and dominating discourses of this country. Knowledge of skilled immigrants' self-reported experiences during their settlement in the new country of residence provides valuable information to inform policy makers on directions to better connect the processes of the successful settlement with immigrant's expectations and knowledge of the society of which they are keenly seeking membership.

7.3 Limitations

This study is limited to the scope of the qualitative research which was conducted with a small number of participants in the context of one country. The findings of the study are drawn from five cases of skilled immigrants' experiences of their settlement in Australia and, therefore, are limited to the Australian context and cannot be generalised to skilled immigrants in other countries with different policies and social and cultural contexts. Additionally, the findings reflect specific characteristics of the participants' unique personalities and trajectories of relocation, as well as the cultural and linguistic backgrounds of five different languages and cultures. It is argued here that in the Australian context, with its experience of receiving immigrants from a wide variety of countries, an examination of immigration in its diversity and heterogeneity benefits understanding of the phenomenon. Therefore, despite possible limitations, the theoretical

and empirical findings of the study, obtained from the variety of the cases, and explored in-depth might be of interest to a broader audience outside Australia.

Methodologically, the findings of this study are limited to the subjective accounts of participants' experiences during their settlement in Australia which were obtained in interaction with the researcher who belongs to the same category of skilled immigrants. The researcher's position as an "insider" had potential to influence the data through researcher bias (Dwyer & Buckle, 2009). This issue is addressed in detail in the Chapter 4 "Methodology". The researcher was fully aware of this possibility, and maintained her researcher's role as a careful and encouraging listener with minimal expression of her own opinions. At the same time, the researcher's identity as an "insider" assisted in understanding the participants' meanings and establishing trusting relationships and rapport with the participants in the study (Georgakopoulou, 2010), arguably adding depth to the elicited data.

7.3 Future research

As skilled immigrants seem to remain in high demand in many countries across the globe, the issues regarding their successful and timely transition into their new chosen environment will predictably continue to be a focus of research, adding to the knowledge of dimensions of skilled immigrants' mobility. With globalisation of processes of migration it becomes increasingly evident that currently, the prevailing economic and pragmatic outlook on skilled immigration does not reflect the complexity of the phenomenon, neither has it assisted in resolving the economic and pragmatic issues of skilled immigrants' employability. An examination of other processes comprising and surrounding skilled immigration, with a focus on people's represented experiences, seems to be a necessary shift in approaching this phenomenon.

The analysis of the cases in the present study revealed the interconnectedness of social and professional domains in the participants' lives, though not all of them were able or wanted to maintain the same levels of engagement with both domains of life. It became evident, however, that their professional identities and self-perceptions as well-educated and skilled specialists, and their desire to be recognised as such through professional and

social participation, were important to all participants in the study. From these perspectives, it is not enough to examine the process of skilled immigrants' search for professional employment or social participation independently, as these processes are interconnected. More studies are needed to explore how skilled immigrants adapt to new professional settings and practices after gaining employment, and what impact the process of their professional adaptation has on their professional and social identities, and their cultural heritage. Knowledge of these factors can increase productivity; Sardana, Zhu, and Veen (2016) point out that "skilled immigrants ... enlarge the talent pool and improve workforce competitiveness" (p. 75). However, it is argued here that this productivity is achievable when skilled immigrants literally and figuratively find their place and their voice in the new environment. Therefore, questions of how skilled immigrants from diverse language and cultural backgrounds attempt to access and maintain competent professional and professional participation through gaining access to different orders of social and professional discourse appear to be significant themes for further elaboration. In this context, the questions of how they transfer, generate, and activate linguistic and communication resources to achieve their goals and (re)construct their "migrant voice" need further examination.

APPENDIX 1



Faculty of education

CONSENT FORM FOR PARTICIPANT

RESEARCH TITLE: *Second Language Identities of Skilled Immigrants in Australia.*

RESEARCHER/S:

Ekaterina Alferova	Dr. Irina Verenikina	Dr. Steven Pickford
Faculty of Education	Faculty of Education	Faculty of Education
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(02)42292730	(02)42214285	(02)42215854

I have been given information about the research: *Second Language Identities of Skilled Immigrants in Australia*, and discussed the research project with Mrs. Alferova, who is conducting this research as part of a PhD degree supervised by Dr. Irina Verenikina and Dr. Steven Pickford in the Faculty of Education at the University of Wollongong.

I have been advised of the burdens and risks associated with my participation in this research. It will include 1 hour of my time to participate in an individual interview conducted every 3-4 months (3 interviews over one year in total), and also to take part in e-mail correspondence with the researcher 2-3 times a month during a period of one year.

I have had an opportunity to ask Ekaterina Alferova any questions regarding the research and my participation.

I understand that my participation in this research is voluntary, and I am free to refuse to participate and I am free to withdraw from the research at any time. My refusal to participate or withdrawal of consent will not affect me in any way.

If I have any enquiries about the research, I can contact Ekaterina Alferova on (02)42292730 or ea976@uow.edu.au, Dr. Irina Verenikina on irina@uow.edu.au, and Dr Steven Pickford on spickfor@uow.edu.au. If I have any concerns or complains regarding the way the research is or have been conducted, I can contact the Ethics Officer, Human Ethics Committee, Office of Research, University of Wollongong on (02)42213386, or e-mail rso-ethics@uow.edu.au.

By signing below I am indicating my consent to participate in a series of interviews and e-mail correspondence.

I understand that the data gathered from my participation will be used in a confidential manner for the purpose of writing a PhD thesis and other academic publications, and I consent for it to be used in that manner.

Signature

Date

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Name

APPENDIX 2

The 1st Interview questions were common for all participants of the study (the list of the questions is below). The questions asked in Interview 2 and Interview 3 were based on the themes emerged from the previous interactions (interviews and e-mail exchanges) with each participant.

General questions

1. What is your name?
2. How old are you?
3. What is your profession?
4. Are you married? Do you have children?
5. Where were you born?
6. Where did you study?
7. Where did you learn English?
8. How long have you studied English for?
9. How can you evaluate your level of English?
10. What language do you speak at home?
11. How long have you lived here?

The immigration

12. Why have you decided to come to Australia?
13. Have you been here before?
14. What impression did you get about this country?
15. Did anybody help you to accommodate?
16. Do you like the place where you live?
17. Did you get a job? How?
18. Tell me something that happened to you that you remember very much, that strongly impressed you (in any way)
19. What is your impression of the people here?
20. Are they different in the country where you were born?
21. With what kind of people are you in contact?
22. Do you identify yourself with the Australians?
23. How do you feel at work?
24. How do you spend your free time?
25. Does your life style in Australia differ from your life style in the country you lived before?
26. In which ways?

The past

- 27. What event influenced your life and way of being the most?
- 28. How was your family? Your city/town/village?
- 29. What do you remember most about your life in a county where you lived before?

The future

- 30. What are your objectives in life?
- 31. Do you feel that you have changed while living in Australia?
- 32. How?

APPENDIX 3

SAMPLE OF DATA ANALYSIS (An extract from Interview 1 with Gabriela)

	Theme	Expressions/Indexicals
G: Yeah. For me to communicate with my friends and I don't need to choose the words and I'm just ready.	Language	I don't need to choose the words
R: And this is it? You don't feel any connections with your native language? You don't find <u>special pleasure</u> in using it?		
G: Uh! (pause) I think the language is my tool (pause). So, I'm a journalist, and I used to work with language every day in Brazil working daily newspapers, so where I need to be very careful about how to choose the words , every kind of single one , because you can like (inaudible) for a person or damage someone's image or damage a company image, so it's kind of danger , so work is kind of dangerous sometimes, but like I can see language as a tool and (pause) I/this is how I believe I have a <u>second tool</u> now. I did well, I was educated and I learnt anything in Portuguese, now I'm using English.	Profession ←	I think the language is my tool .
R: Do you feel privileged because you have two tools now?		
G: Yeah, that's an advantage for me as a journalist. This is why/a reason I came to Australia to study English, because English it was necessary for my profession.	Connections between the past and the present	I believe I have a second tool now .
R: Can you evaluate your level of English when you came to Australia?		
G: I was it was not that bad, it was intermediate or something. I could understand quite well, read - so-so, and speak was the last (little pause), I believe, the last thing to improve, so it took me a while to be able to have work finished into speaking. I know that I also make mistakes, and my pronunciation is not perfect , but I can communicate much better and I advanced correctness in making mistakes. So, if I make mistake, but I already communicate , so...	Initiation (R.) of the topic: ← English language	...that's an advantage [English] for me as a journalist. This is why/a reason I came to Australia to study English , because English it was necessary for my profession.
R: So, it's not important to you?	Travels in time: from past to the present	
G: It is important , to be precise. But I can communicate, (little pause) even using different words if I don't know the exactly word, or translation from Portuguese. But, of course, I would like to know <u>everything every time</u> , to be precise.	Language 2/attitude	I would like to know everything every time , to be precise.
R: So, what's your level of English right now?	Language 2/evaluation	
G: I think I'm <u>at a good level</u> of English. Well, I think I could call myself an advanced student (little pause) and I think I improved much more speaking, but I'm still need to improve the writing, because there is a lot of different rules when I just need to stop: OK! I think we always get improving, like foreign person, in your language . Even in Portuguese, I can be learning like different words in Portuguese. And the languages get changes according with (little pause) whatever, and (little pause) we need to be a kind of open to.	G. shifts from now and here to general and timeless (language)	
R: (pause) Talking about your career in Brazil - when you graduated from the university, you worked for a newspaper?	Initiation (shift from R.) -> profession	
G: Yeah.		
R: For how long? And what did you do there?		

<p>give the privacy to the person, to come over and bring some water, and asks what's going on, and if the person needs some help - they are a little more open, I think - so much more open. And here it's kind of everyone takes care of your life. I think they are sad to some point, and so this is one thing that is bad. And I don't think they are very worried, I'm not too sure they know, they have to solve their problem like mental illness, because I think people don't show that they are not well. And I think people have everything, like they have help, ah (little pause) everything works properly, so there's no exactly re-appoint. In Brazil we have kind of have fight to eat. We still have people looking for food in a garbage bin (inaudible) - not very nice. Ah... So the realities are <u>very different</u>. It's one of the big difference and it still continues like in the big cities like a lot of people checking in the garbage if they can find something. A bit shocking. Because I grow up in the countryside, very small city in a far, so we didn't have all these horrible things. And it's <u>very very different</u>.</p> <p>R: Yes, I was going to ask you whether you are from a big city or from</p> <p>G: =Yeah. Very very small city, like like two thousand, a very small city. It's just one street in my village or (little pause) whatever I'm from.</p> <p>R: Why did you decide to go to the big city and to get good education?</p> <p>G: Yeah, to get education. So, my family - we are three kids: my brother, he went to the university, the public university, and he is like an agronomical engineer. So now he is a professor at the university in the United States, so he did like Master, PhD and everything post PhD, <blah-blah-blah>. And my sister - she went to the same university, she is a nurse. And me (?) It's a very strong regional university, but it's a medium-size uni. And after I moved to find work, keep trying to find a better work and money.</p> <p>R: Are you going to see you brother in the USA?</p> <p>G: Yeah, for two weeks.</p> <p>R: You are not going to visit your family?</p> <p>G: My/No. My mother - she couldn't come to my brother. I haven't seen my mother for the last two years now or something. Still too hard - too much money.</p> <p>R: So, you were a very good professional, as far as I understand, you worked for a successful newspaper and were doing a successful career. Then you decided to change everything and came to Australia. How do you feel <u>here</u>?</p> <p>G: Well. Here things are very different. As <u>an immigrant in a foreign country</u> (laughs).</p> <p>R: Yes. If it's possible - because it's three years back - could you recollect how you felt when you came to Australia some three years ago? And how your feelings probably changed over the time?</p> <p>G: I actually didn't have much expectations when I came to Australia. Because I was actually planning to go to <u>Canada</u>.</p> <p>R: Ok (laughs).</p> <p>G: And when I checked the rules about how to go to Canada and blah-blah-blah, and wasn't allowed to work being a student in Canada, so I said: "Well, I don't need heaps of money, I cannot support myself so for so long without work and where else can I go with the money I did have and work. Or Australia, or England. So, wow, I was going to go to England. And when I go to England, I'd go to Australia". And my/The <u>person</u> who helped me with the <u>course</u> and everything, my school agent, whatever, he told me: "Oh, Australia! It's a good country, blah-blah-blah. And Sydney is</p>	<p>An interesting point – G. compares the realities of Brazil and Australia, A. compares the reality of Spain (European – or developed countries worlds) and Latin America (developing).</p> <p>Topic shift (R.): Education</p> <p>J. develops the topic telling about her family members all of them are university educated</p> <p>Topic shift from R: Life in Australia</p> <p>Planned to go to Canada</p>	<p>Australia</p> <p>Brazil</p> <p>About her home town/village: ...whatever I'm from.</p> <p>[brother] he is a professor ...sister - she went to the same university...</p> <p><u>an immigrant in a foreign country</u></p> <p>didn't have much expectations</p> <p>← Self-quotation</p> <p>← Quotes the person who helped her to find an English language course ...I was quite impressed how</p>
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<p>the best option, because it's bigger/the biggest city, and has more work, opportunities, blah-blah-blah". So that's why I ended with Sydney. And (little pause) I was quite impressed how beautiful the country is. People like (inaudible). I went to stay in a home, with a family here, like home staying (?). And I stayed with them for a month. It was quite nice, <it was very comfortable in the beginning>, because you kind of have someone you come to, they give you a map and say: don't go there, or go there and this is the bus number that you can</p> <p>R: [It was part of your English class?//</p> <p>G: Yes. It was a part of the package that come with my English class.</p> <p>R: So, you came to Australia for learning English, but you kept in mind the possibility to settle down here?</p> <p>G: No, not, not even. Because I was even having my apartment still rented in Brazil, so I was going <to come back in four months>. And (pause) <u>things changed</u>. There was my friend living in my apartment, so she fight with (laughs) with the owner so I have to, when I was here, I had to give the apartment back, so it was a little bit a headache. And...so..in the end it was like December time I've started to go back, and say: "We are going to have a place to go back, because we used to have a rented apartment, and we don't have any more". So, I was staying here one year more, and/ Just...I didn't have a big plan to stay. In any moment I thought, in the beginning: to stay here, just come here, study English, and go back. And I'm got to have more/have a better job, money if you have English. Uh...even if we don't use English all the time in Brazil every day, it's/I could have more opportunities like to work in the big newspaper or whenever, and grow up in my career with English. Even applying for a positions like in PR in a company, I could get more money.</p> <p>R: So, it was supposed to promote your professional development?</p> <p>G: =Yeah, yeah. And this, probably, a short plan - just came here, study and come back. But I said: "Wow, I still would like to learn more". And I basically did nothing, I didn't travel, when people normally come here and do it, I just stayed for study and work in the first month, because that was the idea start to learn English and try to get how much more I could it, like the language's skills. And...Yeah, I wasn't going to stay in the first period. And I said: "That's Ok, because I wasn't that good as I was expecting, with the language, and no place to come back, so I'll stay a little more".</p> <p>R: Was it difficult to find casual job?</p> <p>G: Ah...(pause) It was (pause) yeah, it was so-so, but not that bad. The first work that I found was/I think everyone knows when you arrive here your schooling, I think they provide you with the list of web sites and everything, and you apply so just got a track in applying. And you make a fake resume, because no one has experience. Someone did you like a copy of someone's</p> <p>R: Template</p> <p>G: Yeah, template. Fake resume, when you just pretend you have experience, but I think, they know you don't have any (speaks with a smile), and that's the way (laughs) you find the job. I think, everyone does it, I don't know, in Brazil we don't do this type of work, we don't do waitressing or anything, customary service. When I was eighteen, I was at the university and I was already working in the newsroom. You normally work when you are ready, doing your degree. So, this is the way to make some money, during the university. We don't/It's not common to have this</p>	<p>Impressions of Australia</p> <p>←English as an opportunity to advance the career in BRAZIL: Investment</p> <p>Initiation (R.) Work experience (Australia)</p> <p>Comparison of casual jobs in Brazil and Australia</p>	<p>beautiful the country is.</p> <p>Self-reported speech – in decision making</p> <p>←Self-quotation</p> <p>←Self-quotation</p> <p>Pretend to have experience; We don't do this type of work (unskilled) in Brazil</p>
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<p>type of work. It doesn't exist as casual work in Brazil. Casual work/It's very difficult to understand this market, local work market, but this is because it's so different.</p> <p>R: Did this casual work help you with your English language skills?</p> <p>G: Uhhh...Yes. Because at the beginning I was/ I was like grabbing the menus (laughs), translating all the words I didn't know so I understand a hundred percent blah-blah-blah. And still with the menus, especial the food they sometimes use fancy words something that are not very basically, basic, they use a fancy version just to make it nicer. And this is a problem. Because not always you know all the synonyms and blah-blah-blah. But yeah, yeah - it helps. And, of course, you know, you also talk with different people, different accents, different/ (inaudible) I've contacted with so many foreign students, so everyone like different accent, different way to speak: slowly, quick, or whatever. You kind of improve your your (pause) hearing (inaudible)</p> <p>R: Comprehension</p> <p>G: Yeah.</p> <p>R: What is your favourite accent?</p> <p>G: Uh..I don't know, I don't have one (laughs). But I probably fail (?) to understand the Australian ones. I think sometimes they speak/They have a potato in their mouths.</p> <p>R: I think that's British.</p> <p>G: British?</p> <p>R: Yes.</p> <p>G: They speak strange.</p> <p>R: They speak/I think that's a legend, probably that's not true</p> <p>G: [Right//</p> <p>R: but there is an explanation why Australians speak very fast and without opening their mouths - because in the outback there's so many flies, so you just can't afford opening it</p> <p>G: Uh! Ok. That's the good one!</p> <p>R: (laughs) I don't know whether it's true. It sounds very reasonable to me, because that</p> <p>G: =makes sense (laughs).</p> <p>R: Yes. So, your first job was</p> <p>G: In a restaurant, for my two days and continued until I found up that they paid me nine dollars or something. It was too odd. I think the minimum was fourteen or fifteen. Better just to concentrate in the study study for the first place and work for the second one. And the second work I did that work for an agency, like a function staff agency, they use it everywhere. It was quite nice, because I visited <u>a lot</u> of places, I did <u>a lot</u> of things.</p> <p>R: So, did you organise something? Some events?</p> <p>G: Yeah. The agency/Basically if for example you have (little pause) wedding and you need whatever: twenty waitresses, and you just call them and say: "I have a wedding", and they call you: "That's Ok, just please go to this place at this time".</p> <p>R: Yes. What else did you do?</p> <p>G: Ah..I did a lot of restaurant work, as well. I did (pause) basically, agency and restaurant work, with this hospitality thing. But I also did like voluntary work here, already. I did work for the Cancer council of NSW, and this was not/I did not have any money. And also did this one I've been doing for a</p>	<p>Job and English</p> <p>Australian accent</p> <p>(R.'s and G.'s exchange)</p> <p>Inequality at work</p> <p>Casual work experience: at the restaurant</p> <p>At the function agency</p> <p>Voluntary: Cancer Council</p>	<p>It's very difficult to understand this market, local work market, but this is because it's so different.</p> <p>And this is a problem. Because not always you know all the synonyms and blah-blah-blah.</p> <p>I probably fail (?) to understand the Australian ones</p> <p>too odd</p> <p>[the second job] It was quite nice, , because I visited a lot of places, I did a lot of things.</p> <p>this was not/I did not have any money</p>
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<p>magazine for a year. This is involved the Brazilian community, the thing I do in Portuguese. And I also do some freelancing for Brazil, the biggest Brazilian newspaper, and I also do - have been doing some freelancing here in English and like local companies, blah-blah-blah.</p> <p>R: What actually do you do?</p> <p>G: Now? I do freelancing, and I still work as a waitress, normally on the weekends.</p> <p>R: Have you ever tried to find work that complies with your level of education?</p> <p>G: Yeah. Uh, <u>tried</u>. In the first /Like/So, after my first year of education here I was planning to do work that I do now. "My course is finished, so I translate my real resume and apply". And I was like kind of successful in this thing, I went to interviews, there were some calls then. I think I went to like eight or nine interviews. So I noticed that my resume was something that I was ah.. something...maybe good for the local market...ah...But I did...</p> <p>R: Sorry! You felt that you were overqualified?</p> <p>G: =What do you mean?</p> <p>R: Overqualified for the market. You said you were too good, your resume was too good. Am I right?</p> <p>G: Ah...For what?</p> <p>R: For local market.</p> <p>G: Ahhh...No. no. no! It was good for local market. I could find something good here, for the local market.</p> <p>R: Ok. Yeah. I got it. I thought you were too good, you were too overqualified.</p> <p>G: Oh, no, no. I had/I have a resume that can maybe could be could be a professional work here. This is why I went to the lawyer, talked what can I do, because I was just on a visiting visa, which doesn't allow you to work more than twenty hours. And <u>legally</u> you can not work more than twenty hours. Yeah. I don't think you can find illegal job in this area (laughs), whatever. And I applied for one year marketing course, I finished it and I applied for a Skilled Visa, so finally I got the permission to work full time, so now I apply for a full time job positions, so try to find something in this area of market, media communications. But I know the market is very low in positions in this area now, so we'll see what's going happen.</p> <p>R: So, how do you evaluate your chances to find the job in an area of your expertise? What actually would you like to do?</p> <p>G: I...Whatever I could. I'd like to be working in a journalist communication market. I know that I'm not able/I'm not completely confident to do what I'm used to do in Brazil. What do I mean in Brazil - to write three or four materials every day. I think this is too much English to me. And I (pause) too tiring, because you stay in the stress all the time. I would like to have a little bit of life. But I think I'd like to be a news producer, something that's behind the scenes, like contacting other journalists, and I have mentioned a lot of people, foreign people in Australia, working for these positions, so it's possible. Yes, this is what I'm dreaming for my work.</p> <p>R: So, how many times have you applied for a job since you've got this visa that allows you to work full-time?</p> <p>G: How many jobs? How many positions? Uh...I don't know. Maybe twenty or more?</p>	<p>Brazilian community magazine</p> <p>Professional jobs</p> <p>Investment in education (Marketing)</p> <p>Skilled Migrant Visa</p> <p>Loss of confidence in professional capabilities in L2</p> <p>Shift to a different lifestyle (from her home country)</p> <p>Search for work in Australia</p>	<p>"...I noticed that my resume was maybe good for the local market..."</p> <p>I'm not able/I'm not completely confident to do what I'm used to do</p> <p>too tiring in the stress all the time</p> <p>I would like to have a little bit of life.</p> <p>behind the scenes</p>
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<p>R: Twenty.</p> <p>G: What is not much.</p> <p>R: Ok. How many responses did you get?</p> <p>G: Uh...Not many. Because, I think, one of the points still I got this in December, so like December, January</p> <p>R: It's not a good time.</p> <p>G: Yeah, I think this time of the year (inaudible) <u>basically dead</u>. But I hope the things <u>get better</u>, and yeah...I maybe will be trying, as well, because the market low in this area, something like parallel, I like public relations, which has more money, and more positions, I think. So that's going to be something in my area, I hope.</p> <p>R: You are very optimistic right now.</p> <p>G: Yeah.=Even with the newspaper headlines (shows me a newspaper issue) said: the local market is bad. (pause). Basically, the newspaper said there was more jobs like that in November, December, January than in previous years, and there is a lot of things that they are proposing; retail, shopping on-line. So may be online that I can working, as well. I already have some experience. Not much fun, but fine.</p> <p>R: How flexible are you? Are you looking for a job only here, in Sydney - or you are flexible to move to Melbourne or somewhere else?</p> <p>G: =Oh, I can go anywhere. I did apply for one somewhere in Darwin, or whatever.</p> <p>R: In Darwin?</p> <p>G: Yeah. It's very hot there, I know. But I never mind.</p> <p>R: And crocodiles, and sharks.</p> <p>G: (laughs)</p> <p>R: That's great! Look, I would like to meet with you in some months and talk about how your expectations are realised.</p> <p>G: Uhu. I hope so!</p> <p>R: Yes, yes, that'll be very lovely. How often do you have opportunity to speak your native language?</p> <p>G: I speak/I have quite close friends, Brazilians, so I can speak every day, I can use my native language whenever I call them, when we go somewhere, go to the movies, whatever. So, it's very, very, very pleasant.</p> <p>R: Do you have friends who are Australians?</p> <p>G: Yeah. Yeah.</p> <p>R: Do you understand them?</p> <p>G: Yeah!</p> <p>R: Even when they use slang or idioms?</p> <p>G: Not all, but...Yeah.</p> <p>R: What do you do, when you hear an unknown expression? Do you ask for an explanation? What's your reaction?</p> <p>G: Ahh..Yeah, if it's possible - yes. If the person is welcomed - yes. If they are like friends, like Australians, they say directly I'm making mistake. Ah... Help me with my with pronunciation, whatever. Normally, I try to learn.</p> <p>R: I wonder whether your lifestyle has changed since you arrived to Australia.</p> <p>G: Uh..Here I much more fit. Well, in Brazil I used to work a lot, and in the evenings I stayed in the office. And here I do more physical activities, yoga, I run, and I go to the parks, and have picnics. I like go to beach. I wasn't looking for a beach in Brazil, like everything was <u>far</u>. Here I have a better</p>	<p>Initiation (R.) Professional job – and the lifestyle</p> <p>Determination to find professional employment – seeking it everywhere in Australia</p> <p>Use of L1</p> <p>Social life in Australia</p> <p>Learning L2</p> <p>Changing lifestyle in Australia</p>	<p>Even with the newspaper headlines: the local market is bad</p> <p>Working on-line: “not much fun”</p> <p>...it's very, very, very pleasant...</p>
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<p>quality of life, I think. But still missing the work point, which is quite frustrating. I think: "Oh, I'm quite qualified". But I hope the things <u>get better</u>.</p> <p>R: What if you were offered job not in the area of your expertise, would you accept it?</p> <p>G: Like something nearby?</p> <p>R: Yes.</p> <p>G: Something similar?</p> <p>R: Yes.</p> <p>G: Yeah, I can consider.</p> <p>R: What about something different?</p> <p>G: Not too much different. I have a working <u>mentor</u>, like a work mentor, and he was telling me things: Oh, maybe consider this type of job, maybe consider blah-blah-blah, oh, administrative position, blah-blah-blah. So, well, I know I wanna change something better in life, because of something better more like ego, which a bit of money more, still I'm going to be happy. I can consider something that I'm going to be happy, like maybe working for a non-for-profit organisation, or doing things like that would be nice, but I'm not going to be working for life in a company, doing boring office job to make some coins. And I'm easy, open - if I'm gonna see the things are not going to work - I'm not attached to Australia, so I can (inaudible).</p> <p>R: Uhu! (pause). I wonder whether you put some limitations to the period when you can find job. Let's say, if you don't find job during two-year time</p> <p>G: [Yeah!]</p> <p>R: would you apply for a job overseas, probably?</p> <p>G: Like, like I have this year that I think I'll make things work.</p> <p>R: Just one year?</p> <p>G: I think, one year is enough for you to find (little pause) if it's working or not. And (pause) if things are not going to work, I'm gonna to find something else somewhere else (laughs), I don't know.</p> <p>R: What are you thinking about?</p> <p>G: Maybe I'll apply for a PhD overseas or something. I know this is kind of opportunities, like Europe, even United States, even Brazil, the Brazilian government is giving like scholarships overseas. Maybe can be something, that I can consider.</p> <p>R: Great!</p> <p>G: (inaudible)</p> <p>R: Yes, I was going to ask you about your family.</p> <p>G: No family, I'm here the one.</p> <p>R: Do you have a boyfriend?</p> <p>G: =Nope, no boyfriend. Too busy working in the function, working in the parties, so no. No.</p> <p>R: Do you feel lonely?</p> <p>G: Uhm...I <u>learnt</u> to be with <u>myself</u> (pause). Like (little pause) I <u>have</u> my <u>friends</u> and I <u>can call</u> them, if I want to do this. Or I can not call no one and go to the cinema <u>by myself</u>, would go to be fine. And even if I feel like: oh, just wanna go to and have a beer in a pub, by myself, I do it. And I know, there's people there, so kind <u>of very independent</u>, I think. (pause) Just <u>do</u> it. Don't <u>bother</u> or <u>call</u> someone, whatever. But no, I don't feel lonely. And I think, I'm <u>close</u> with my <u>family</u>, <u>even here</u>, because we have been talking a</p>	<p>Misses professional employment</p> <p>Jobs opportunities: willingness to accept any similar roles</p> <p>Changing system of values: shift to a more relaxed and enjoyable lifestyle</p> <p>Flexible attitude to opportunities</p> <p>Planning an investment in further education</p> <p>Further education</p> <p>Positioning</p>	<p>still missing the work point, which is quite frustrating.</p> <p>I'm not going to be working for life in a company, doing boring office job to make some coins</p> <p>I'll apply for a PhD overseas or something.</p> <p><u>I learnt</u> to be with <u>myself</u></p> <p>I'm <u>close</u> with my <u>family</u>, <u>even here</u>, because we have been talking <u>a lot</u> and use Skype, even more</p>
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<p><u>lot and</u> use Skype, even more than we lived (little pause) like <u>near</u>. Quite interesting (in a quiet voice).</p>	<p>Relations with friends</p>	<p>than we lived (little pause) like <u>near</u>. Quite interesting.</p>
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